1110

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE

PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE,

VOL. III.

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PASTOR'S FIRE-SIDE,

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A

NOVEL,

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MISS JANE PORTER,

AUTHOR OF THADDEUS OF WARSAW, SIDNEY'S APHORISMS, AND THE SCOTTISH CHIEFS.

I will confess the ambitious projects which I once had, are dead within me. After having seen the parts which fools play upon the great stage; a few books, and a few friends, are what I shall seek to finish my days with. TWEDDELL.

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CHAP. I.

THE first thought that occurred to Louis next day, was a wish to enquire at the door of the Bavarian Palace, after the health of its noble inmates. The frank and ardent gratitude of the illustrious widow, had interested his feelings; and, adding to this, the undescribable attaching quality which lies in an obligation, such as that he had conferred on the Electress, seemed to draw him towards her with an irresistible attraction. Benefits and gratefulness, when interchanged by generous natures, are bonds, garlanded in paradise. They draw, by invisible

cords, but their rivets are eternal. Gratitude looks up with endearing confidence to the bestower of its good; and the consciousness of yielding protection, like the divine source of all benevolence, fills the heart with a sweet tenderness towards its object.

With all this in his thoughts, Louis allowed prudence to put his wishes to silence; and he left it to accident, to inform him of the health or indisposition of them he had preserved.

His official duty of this morning passed with a deputation from the merchants of Ostend. He had received his father's commands to that purpose, to hold a conference with them respecting the sanction which the Spanish Monarch had granted to their Indian trade, to the great umbrage of the mercantile interests of Great Britain and Holland. The Emperor had insisted on this guarantee of Spain; and the Queen, with her usual impatience, ordered it to be accorded without reserve.

But Ripperda, when he yielded to the temporary necessity, had guarded it with a clause in the privileges, to which Charles as well as themselves continued to object. To know the result of the Spanish minister's further deliberation was the cause of their present embassy.

When Louis had discussed the affair with the merchants, their president retired with the young negociator, to sign, in the name of the company, several papers, which Ripperda had left for that purpose. Louis and he were then alone. When the merchant had endorsed the deeds, he took two caskets of different sizes from under his vest. — He unclasped them, and laid them open on the table. They contained unset jewels, of a value that seemed incalculable.

"These, my Lord;" said he, "are poor tributes of the high consideration in which we hold the able conduct of the Duke de Ripperda, and his secretary of legation, in this troublesome affair. I am

empowered by my colleagues to say, that the larger casket is worth 30,000*l.*, and the lesser, 20,000*l.* But were they millions, they would be inadequate to rėpay our boundless obligations to the Ambassador of Spain : — and on the renewal of our guarantee, every seven years, we will give the same."

This kind of gratitude was so little foreseen by the Duke de Ripperda, he had not given his son any directions respecting it. Louis did not feel that he required any : — It was not the gratitude that softened and subdued his heart. He closed the caskets, and putting them back into the hands of the merchant. — "Sir," said he, "the Ambassador of Spain, and his Secretary, are sufficiently repaid for the discharge of their duties to their country, and to the world in general, by the approbation and prosperity of those they serve. Rewards of any other kind, the cannot accept ; as they neither understand, nor value them."

The dignity with which Louis said this,

as he laid the implied bribe from his hand, struck the president for a moment speechless; but hastily recovering himself, he held the caskets forth a second time, and was opening his lips to enforce their acceptance, when Louis, rather haughtily, as well as sternly, put out his arm with a repelling motion, and interrupted him. — But in the moment he spoke, Orendayn entered the apartment to pass through. Seeing it occupied, he apologized, and hastily retreated, though not so fast, but his sordid eye caught the glittering treasure. Louis resumed. "Sir," said he, "do not irrecoverably offend the son of the Duke de Ripperda, by shewing him that you have mistaken his father! If either he, or I, have influence in these affairs, when the guarantee is to be renewed, we must forget that we have heard of, or seen these caskets, before we can put our hands to a second grant. You will excuse me now, Sir, if I withdraw."

With the word, he bowed and left him. The confused merchant gathered up his caskets and his charter, and, with the air of a culprit, stole out the room.

At the usual hour of stirring abroad, Louis bent his course to the Princess de Waradin's, to enquire of her health after the late alarm. As he drove along, he passed the crowded ruins of the Opera-house, now lying a smoking mass of stone and smouldering timber. He shuddered to think, but for his perseverance, the amiable boy he had seen, would have been left a helpless orphan; and the lovely mother, who had led him to behold her son as he slept, at this moment a blackened corse under the steaming pile before him. That he had been instrumental in saving two fellow-creatures, from so horrible a death, dilated his bosom with aweful gratitude; and when he alighted at the house of the Princess de Waradin, he sympathised with unaffected

piety, in her thanksgivings to heaven, for the escape of herself and her daughter.

Amelia was indisposed, and in her chamber. Her mother did not lose the opportunity of enforcing upon Louis, her daughter's conviction, that she owed the preservation of her life to him. He combated the idea with frank eagerness, shewing the little share he had in exertions, in which so many had assisted. But it was useless for him to disqualify those claims on her gratitude she was determined to think he possessed; and, insinuating that Amelia alone could repay them, he felt more embarrassed than gratified with her flattering pertinacity.

The views which the Princess de Waradin had upon Louis, made her use every maternal art to domesticate him in her family; but the hurrying vortex into which he was plunged, rendered that impossible. Every house of consequence at Vienna was open to him; and in all he found different orders of amusement,

according to the character of the several sets. Though the rank of these circles might be on the same level, yet the component parts, by an involuntary attraction, formed themselves into distinct societies, according to their different degrees of constitutional gaiety, mental qualifications, or hereditary prejudices. In some, he was wearied by everlasting state ceremonies, and the stiffness and stupidity inseparable from a superstitious regard to formalities. In others, he was occasionally entertained, interested, or disgusted, in proportion as he met with amiable manners, personal kindness, or riotous excess.

To kill time seemed the great purpose of amusement, in the world to which he was now introduced. Whether he dined with statesmen, with military, or with philosophers; though the conversation at table might be to his soul's content; of "battles fought, and glory won;" of the "gordian knot" of policy; or the high-reaching thoughts of those who analyse

the universe: — still the evening ended the same. They all proposed adjourning, some to one place and some to another; and many to scenes of idle dissipation, against which his taste revolted. However, he remembered his father's advice, "to wear his own superiority, meekly!" and seldom refused to accompany them to places, whence he generally returned wearied, offended, and displeased.

The gambling table; the board spread to excess; the smiles of meretricious beauty; all were found, in the scenes to which his new acquaintance introduced him. He thought, "If of such stuff be the pleasures of young men, it is well they are dissipations of mind, as well as of time; else, how could reflection bear the retrospect of the best hours of human life, spent in such base vassalage to the lowest propensities! It is a disordered state of being, in which nothing is seen, and felt, and heard, but through the medium of delirium. I can-

not mingle with it; I cannot make this sacrifice of my time and feelings, even to comply with the wishes of my father."

He wrote to Ripperda, to this effect. But the answer he received, would not permit him to withdraw. The Duke told him, that he was called upon to know, and to act with mankind; and how could he do either, if he only saw them at their hours of form? He must attend them in the undress of their minds; when the passions unveiled their hearts. There would then be no need of a window in the bosom, to understand how each man might be stimulated or restrained. With regard to his own situation in this crucible of character; as he felt disgust at what was temptation to others, he ought more readily to submit himself to the apparent trial.

"You have genius, and distinction sufficient, already," added Ripperda, "to create jealousy enough. If you have a mind above the common recreations of

man, let that be, I repeat, to the private satisfaction of your own heart; it will keep your judgment cool, and your proceedings independent. But while you act with men, and would incline them to your purpose, you must appear to partake their nature. Let me hear, when I return, that you go wherever you are invited. Your companions will be too much absorbed in their own pursuits, to mark whether you are an actor, or a spectator; but go with them."

Louis compared these principles with that of Wharton, *I mingle with the dross of the earth, to extract its gold!* They were the same; they were specious to the adventurous virtue of youth: and finding his partiality to the English Duke, strengthened by this sympathy in maxim with his father, he more readily determined to struggle against the delicacy of his taste, and to pass through things so discordant to him, with sealed ears and eyes.

During the lengthened absence of Ripperda, which was prolonged by the Emperor much beyond the time he proposed; Louis saw all that a luxurious capital could present to the seduction of youth and affluence. There were circles of dissipation, of a higher class than those to which he had first been introduced; and these were at the houses of a class of nobility, who lived to pleasure alone. If vice were there, she was arrayed by the graces, with splendor, and softness, sophistries, and flatteries, to make man forget he was mortal, and had ought to do in life, but sail with the fabling syrens, down the silver sea of time. No voice of sorrow was ever heard in its air; no sigh of care ever breathed on its flowery shores; no tear ever dimmed the eternal lustre of that sky. Human nature's curse of travail and woe; man's distresses, and sympathy for pain, were all here excluded. The blest inhabitants lived for themselves alone;

and all was revelry, from the rising to the setting sun; from moon-light, to the morning star. But Louis had a heart and a soul, as well as eyes and ears; and still he found no satisfaction in such waste of enjoyments. The bosoms that panted there, beat with animal life alone; and the souls which animated their bodies, were asleep in their vapoury cell.

As he passed through the crowded chambers, in which his spirit felt a happy solitude, the conversations of Mr. Athelstone often occurred to him; and he leaned pensively against many a rosy-wreathed arcade, musing on the prophetic lessons of his earliest friend.

All around was prosperity and enjoyment. But he recollected, that his uncle had said, "sweet are the uses of adversity! — Bitter to the taste, but aromatic in effect, they preserve nature from corruption. Man, in the indolence of repletion, breaks out with infinite disorders;

and like the ocean, whose constant motion keeps its waters pure, requires exercise of mind and body. If it be not active to good, it will be to evil, for what lies between is stagnation. Unchanging prosperity cloys by possession; and the sated spirit looks around for new excitements. It is then that the passions and the appetites wander abroad in the stimulating search, and are easily tempted to forbidden paths." The Pastor of Lindisfarne had once paused on the page of Shakespeare, which his nephew was reading to his cousins:—

"Yet marked I where the bolt of *Cupid* fell!
It fell upon a little western flower;
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound;
And maidens call it *Love in Idleness*."

"Not love, my children," cried the venerable instructor; "love was bestowed by heaven on man, to be a help-mate to his labours. It is wantonness, that is the offspring of idleness. But the *son of the bondswoman*, arrays himself like the *heir*

of promise, and the sons and daughters of earth, are a while mocked by his pretensions!"

When Louis saw this scene performed before him, he thought how melancholy it was to behold the cheat; how wretched to see the blessings of life transformed into its bane. To view men and women of rank and talents, and abundant power to become the benefactors and examples of mankind, immerese all in one broad system of selfishness, till a dangerous delusion spread over every faculty, and the character exhibited one mass of sentimental weakness, intemperate passions, splendid follies, and hardened vice!

In many of these parties, Louis met Duke Wharton; but he never staid more than a few minutes, though those few were hailed by an adulation that might have detained a prouder spirit. He ever left sighs behind; and Louis shared the regret; though still his friend passed him

by unheeding; except, sometimes by a smile from a distance, or a glance of the eye, as they mingled in the crowd.

By a similar wordless communion, Louis found the impression he had made on the Electress, was not effaced. In riding through the Prato, he often met her carriage; and she always leaned forward, with looks he could not mistake; and when she thought herself unobserved, she kissed her hand to him, with all the eagerness of suppressed, but ardent gratitude. He generally gazed wistfully after her carriage; for the image of Wharton united with her idea. He was her counsellor, her friend. How great must be her qualities, to have secured such a distinction!—Louis would not believe that she could have been privy to the murderous policy of some of her agents: he had seen enough in his last interview, to excite his fancy to complete the flattering picture; and where his

imagination kindled, his heart was too apt to glow.

Things were in this state, when the Imperial family, and with them the Duke de Ripperda, arrived suddenly from the country. As soon as he alighted at his own house, Louis flew to welcome him.

"Follow me," replied the Duke.

Louis saw a contraction on his father's brow, which he noted as a herald of disagreeable tidings, yet he did not linger in obeying. They entered the saloon.

"I see you anticipate what I have to tell you," said the Duke. "The Empress is resolved on your marrying her favourite."

Louis was momentarily shocked by this announcement, but rallying himself with the hope that he had offended Otteline past forgiveness, he answered; "could I be weak enough to second the Empress's wishes; after what I said to Countess Altheim in our last conference, she must reject me."

"If she loved you she would. But as it is all one to her, by what means she ascends to distinction; she cares not whether it be on your heart, or over her own delicacy. The Empress, too, forgets her own consequence, in eagerness to aggrandise her favourite. She protests that you have given Otteline every proof of attachment; that circumstances demanded it; and your honour is pledged to redeem the reputation she has lost on your account."

As his father recapitulated her patroness's discourse, in which, more earnest than judicious, she allowed too much of the selfish aim in the views of her friend to be seen; the entire remains of Louis's infatuation, (which still lurked in the shape of pity), passed away like a mist; and with faculties, at once cleared from every suggestion of vanity or tenderness, he strongly declared that he never would marry Countess Altheim. He allowed, that he had shewn too many signs

of headlong passion ; but he repeated, in his extremest phrenzy, he had warned her that he was at his father's disposal alone: and, for her reputation being sacrificed, that could be no longer an argument, since the avowed object of his visits to the Empress would sufficiently confute the slander grounded on them.

"It must not be avowed that your discovered visits to these apartments were to the Empress. The Emperor knows that you negociated with Sinzendorff; but am I to remind you, that should he ever suspect her private interference in the affair, his latent jealousy would find its object, and the consequence I need not repeat."

"Then," exclaimed Louis, in a sudden agony of spirit, "I am lost!"

"Not if your father can extricate you," returned the Duke; "but I fear you must marry her."

Though his heart had just told him the same, the words uttered by his father

were like a death-stroke; and knocking his clenched hand upon his breast, he groaned aloud.

"De Montemar," said the Duke, "does not the spirit you so devoutly dedicated to glory, does it not suggest the means of performing this hard act of duty to your country; and yet not allow it to trouble you beyond the present hour?"

"Impossible," returned he; "in marrying the Countess Altheim, I shall marry my disgrace and my abhorrence."

"The act must pass for that of headstrong passion; or, perhaps, a little more in your own way, as an act of romantic justice to the woman who has incurred dishonour for your sake.—Passion always finds its apology with men; so the world may smile, but it will forgive you; and when she is your wife ——"

"My wife! never, never!" interrupted Louis, "my name shall never be rendered infamous by giving the world to suppose that it was possible for me to

make her my wife, whom even her future husband could persuade from virtue. How could the Empress sully her matron-lips with the vile suggestion? I never dishonoured the Countess Altheim, in word or deed; and I will not act as if I had been such a villain. I will not brand myself as a seducer, a dupe, or a madman! One of the three he must be, who unites himself to the reputation she has incurred, by her own arts and follies alone!"

The Duke permitted him to exhaust himself before he again spoke.

Equally averse with Louis, to his son's union with the mere minion of any crowned head, he was aware that open opposition in this instance, would embarrass all his other objects. The Queen of Spain's fury against France, and her eagerness for revenge, had put the Spanish interest totally into the power of the Empress. In her first rage, she had written a letter to Elizabeth, of unguarded relin-

quishment; which Ripperda vainly attempted to qualify. The Empress saw the advantage Isabella had yielded, and in spite of her friend's representations, she maintained it in the amplest sense. Spain had, therefore, by the fury of its Queen, given up all check upon the non-execution of the most momentous articles in the treaty. She soon found the effects of her rashness; and in letters of despair to Ripperda, acknowledged that it now wholly depended on his fidelity and contrivance, whether Austria should fulfil its engagements, or the business end in loss and disgrace.

Another reason, besides her infatuated attachment to the companion of her childhood, urged Elizabeth to insist on the engagement of de Montemar with Countess Altheim. Ripperda marked her manner; and foresaw the vexatious delays she would throw in the way of the execution of the treaty, if he should appear to thwart her wishes.

When she arrived from Baden, at the Luxemburg, it was not long before she granted him a private interview; and, notwithstanding all the influence of her partiality in his behalf, when he attempted to give his own reasons against his son marrying at so early an age, she turned on him with a look and demeanour, more like that with which Catherine de Medicis repelled the insinuations of Cardinal Mazarin, when he sought to betray her into sanctioning a marriage between his niece and the king; than the familiar confidence with which Elizabeth had always regarded the Duke de Ripperda. Ripperda understood her suspicion, and her scorn; and had he not possessed a political self-command, equal to his towering pride, the reply of his eyes and his voice at that moment, would have severed a friendship which had lasted eighteen years, and dashed to atoms the present vaunted fabric of peace to Eu-

rope for succeeding generations. He affected not to have observed the air with which she had uttered these otherwise innoxious words.

"Your son is old enough to be the colleague of politicians; and surely he is not too young to be the protector of an amiable and tender woman, whose only strength lay in my love, and her spotless name. The last she has lost through his handsome face, her fidelity to me, and the malignancy of the Electress of Bavaria; and, my love, and his honour, must and shall restore, what he and I have destroyed!"

In short, she gave him to understand, more than had ever passed between Otteline and his son; but sufficient to convince him, that she considered Louis bound beyond release; and that his attached mistress was so assured of the same, there was nothing on the earth could induce her to withdraw her claim.

She accused Louis of cold, dissembling vanity; treated with disdain the high principle which had impelled his rejection of her friend; and added, that she should influence the Emperor not to permit the reversionary investiture of Don Carlos into the possession of the Italian Dukedoms, to take place on the person of Louis, till Otteline should appear at the ceremony as Marchioness de Montemar.

After this insinuation, Ripperda saw there was no resource but to dissimulate and gain time. But, knowing the sincerity of his son in all his transactions; he found it necessary to alarm his delicacy and honour, to induce him to embrace, without consideration, any prospect of escape from so disreputable a union. The base exaggerations of Otteline, in her representations to the Empress of his conduct, and his own desperate entanglement with her, wrought him almost to phrenzy.

The Duke owned, that as circumstances were, there was a necessity for the marriage; or, at least, an appearance of preparing for its celebration. Should events compel the ceremony, Louis might extricate himself from its domestic discomforts, as soon as the affairs between the two countries were brought to a happy consummation. He might then leave his bride, and never see her more; being well assured, that she would be fully satisfied in the enjoyment of her new rank, by the side of her infatuated mistress. But this was taking the case at the worst, for could they mislead the Empress and her favourite by apparent compliance, and real delays in the performance, events might start forward to elude the whole.

"I cannot, Sir," cried Louis, "I cannot compromise myself one moment on so abhorrent a subject! How could I look up, if I were to be pointed at wherever I moved, as the future hus-

band of this justly contemned widow of Count Altheim? My Lord, command me in every thing but this! Send me from Vienna, — banish me where you will, but do not entangle me farther with that insidious woman! Do not subject me to the consciousness, that I am any way deserving the punishment of being ensnared beyond the power of extrication."

"Louis," replied the Duke, "there is nothing that I can command, or counsel you to do, to unite the preservation of your private freedom, with your public duty, but a temporary system of deceiving the Empress and her favourite. When you entered a political career, you engaged on oath, to sacrifice every thing; your bosom's passions, and even your reputation with men, to the service of your country, should it be demanded. You are now called upon to perform the first part of this vow."

"Yes, Sir, but I did not engage to

sacrifice my conscience. That belongs to God alone; and, I will perish, or keep it so."

"Then you must marry the Countess Altheim," calmly, rejoined his father.

"In the hour that I do," replied Louis, "I shall have given my heart's dearest blood to the country I have never seen! to the country I will never see! I will abjure the world, and retire to die a despised wretch, where I may not hear the derision I have plucked upon the name of de Montemar."

"And will that be obedience to your conscience?" asked the Duke, "if so, mark its inconsistency, and sometimes doubt its text. Before I quitted the Empress, I brought her to apologise to me, for the offensive innuendos she had dropped at the beginning. I brought her to tears, when I reminded her how I had served her and her daughter, in the establishment of the Pragmatic Sanction. But before I accomplished this con-

quest over a self-willed and powerful sovereign, I removed every impression from her mind that I had any other objection to the proposed union, than your youth, and the lady being so much your senior. In the moment of reconciliation, I smoothed your path. I alledged that my duty towards my new country, obliged me to write thither, to ask permission of the King and Queen of Spain to form a foreign alliance, before I could formally give my consent. In this, the Empress acquiesced. Here then, is one delay secured. Meanwhile, should you appear to concur heartily in the arrangement, I have little doubt of winning upon Elizabeth to grant the investiture before the messenger can return; the engine will then be restored to our own hand; and we may protract and excuse, and finally break away without danger."

"No, Sir," replied Louis, "I abhor this marriage, because of the want of all honourable principle in the woman who

had infatuated me; and I never will move one step to avoid it, by becoming the thing I abhor. If my liberty is only to be regained by acting a falsehood, — a treacherous falsehood! I submit to my cruel destiny, and I will marry her."

"That is to yourself alone," replied the Duke, rising from his chair with a disturbed, and even a severe countenance. "But, remember, it is your duty to await the return of my messenger from Spain."

"I will wait, my father, as long as you please. But, I repeat, it is with no purpose to deceive. If I ever appear again in the presence of the Countess Altheim, to permit her to consider me as her future husband; it must be with the intention, on my part, to become so at the prescribed time. My weak vassalage to beauty has brought me to this; and heavy will be the punishment, but it is more tolerable than my own utter contempt."

"You must visit her this evening."

"Not alone, my Lord! That never shall be exacted from me. Till she bears my name, no power shall compel me to be alone with her!"

"Who, then, must be your companion? I cannot."

"Tell the Empress, I demand it of her tenderness for the Countess's honour, that some person be always present when we meet. Should I ever find it otherwise, in that instant I will withdraw."

"In that, you are right," replied his father; and quitted the apartment.

CHAP. II.

ELIZABETH's reply to Ripperda's note, respecting the delicate scruple of his son, told him that herself would be present at the scene of reconciliation.

To go to this portentous interview, was, to Louis, like setting forth to execution. A curtain seemed to have dropped between him and all the world. It closed out, not only every domestic comfort, but every aim of ambition. Fame was now robbed of its glory; and the ardour of pursuit, turned into a joyless resolve of fulfilling his task from a sense of duty alone. His heart felt like a petrifaction in his breast; his veins were chilled; and, with a cloud over every faculty, he paced his way, as a man in a dream, through the often trod, but now hateful

galleries of the Imperial Palace. He knew not how his faultering steps bore him into the *boudoir* where he expected to see Otteline, but instead of her pleading or resentful form, he found himself in the august presence of the Empress.

She advanced to meet him, all smiles; but what her first words were, he knew not. She observed his pale looks, and the distracted wandering of his eyes; but she would not notice either.

"Whatever was your quarrel with Otteline, in your last meeting;" continued she, "her gentle spirit is ready to grant you forgiveness. Shall I conduct you to her feet?"

"To her presence, Madam," replied Louis, recalling his attention; "I shall be honoured in following Your Majesty; but not to her feet. I cannot ask her forgiveness, for addressing her with candour."

Elizabeth looked sternly at him.

"Young man, you are not come here,

to brave the Empress of Germany! Beware, Louis de Montemar, of insulting my friend, beyond, even her persuasions to pardon!"

"I come to speak the truth;" replied he, "to declare that I am ready to fulfil every claim that Countess Altheim demands of my honour; but also to throw myself on Your Majesty's justice to me, and tenderness for her; by a frank avowal, that I shall contract this marriage against my heart, and against my conviction, that my honour does not acknowledge the pledge she asserts."

The Empress remained indignantly silent, while he briefly recapitulated the cause of his repugnance to the union she was determined to accomplish.

"It is as impossible for me to restore her to my esteem," added he, "as to relinquish my nature. But if, under the circumstances I have mentioned, Your Majesty deems me bound, where no engagement was made; and when I have

already told her, that our hearts are as separated as our natures; — I am ready to submit to become her husband, with the cold, soul-less duty, the name may enforce."

Louis stood firm, though pale and respectful, before the resentful gaze of Elizabeth.

"Sir," said she, "you know how to insult; and you know how to attempt to wrest from a tender woman, the rights you have given her over your honour, — But I am her protectress; and shall hold the chain that binds you, until death severs it. Young man, I know more of that vain heart, than I can easily pardon. — And yet, you dare to tell me, that your honour made no engagement with Countess Altheim, because you did not say, in veritable words — *I offer you my heart, my hand, my fortune, and my life!* But, did you not weep on her hand? Did you not press it to your breast, while you vowed you loved, adored, and lived only

in her smile? Did you not proffer her your life, to clear her aspersed fame? Did you not pledge her your heart; were you not sensible that you were master of hers? and what was all this, but a bond to be hers; a pledge, that you were hers? What is *honour*, if it be only a word and not an action? and, in this case, an interchange of soul for soul? — All this has passed between you, and yet you talk of your honour being your own!"

Louis stood impressed, but not confounded by the truth of this appeal. While he felt the reproach to many of his sex, he might have said with Hamlet: —

"Let the galled jade wince; my withers are unwrung!"

Elizabeth observed a change in his countenance, and with all the woman in her Imperial heart, she exclaimed, "Oh, man, man!" But checking herself from completing the apostrophe, she turned proudly away, and walked up the room. She returned, and addressed him.

"I have condescended to argue thus

with you, because you are the son of the Duke de Ripperda. His unswerving probity disdains subterfuge; act as becomes his son, and I may forget, what Otteline is too ready to pardon."

Louis looked up. The noble candour in his eyes almost dazzled the stedfast, doubting gaze of Elizabeth.

"Had I sought a subterfuge," replied he, "I should have merited the utmost of Your Majesty's disdain; but from the first moment that I found myself too sensible to her charms, I struggled against the disclosure; and when circumstances extorted the confession from me, with the declaration of my love, I also declared that I was not at my own disposal. These reproaches, do not, then hold on me. For had she still appeared, what I then supposed her; had my father refused his consent, I would have proved my fidelity by never giving my hand to any other woman."

"Your father gives his consent!" an-

swered the Empress, " and as you yield obedience to his commands, it is well they coincide with the bonds of your honour. I accept your offered terms for my friend; your hand, with the consideration due to your wife. For know, vain boy, that Otteline has a spirit as dignified as it is tender; and will not brook obloquy, either from her lover, the world, or her husband!"

Louis would have spoken, but she put out her hand in sign of silence.

" Follow me, Marquis" cried she, " and the consequences of the next two hours be on your own head."

The consequences he already felt in his heart; and, without further look of remonstrance, or attempt to utter another word, he bowed and obeyed.

She opened a door in the farthest apartment, and discovered the beautiful favourite, seated on a sofa awaiting them. She was luxuriant in every charm. And perhaps the flush of a smothered indig-

nation, irradiated her complexion with redoubled brilliancy. But all was worse than lost upon the senses of Louis. Every beauty appeared to him, like the serpents on the Gorgon's head, wreathing to sting him. She rose as the Empress entered.

"Otteline," cried Her Majesty with a proud smile; "I have brought you a penitent. Can you pardon and receive him again to your heart?"

"Oh, Wharton!" exclaimed the inmost soul of Louis, at that moment recollecting the rejected warning of his friend; "This *Semiramis* and her *subtle confidant,* have, indeed, bound me in a toil unto death!"

As he approached, the Countess made some answer, which he rather heard in its tones than its words; for almost instantly, Elizabeth had put the hand of Otteline into his. He held it, but it was without pressure; without recognizance of the delight with which he once grasped it.

"Now," continued the Empress, "I am happy since I see the son of my earliest counsellor, thus affiance himself to the cherished friend of my youth!"

As she spoke, she pressed their hands together, while a mortal coldness shot through the heart of Louis, at this consummation of his fate; and stupified, he neither saw nor heard for a few moments. In this interval the Empress disappeared. Otteline sunk, weeping into a chair. He turned his eyes upon her; but no sympathy was in their beams; no belief in the semblance of her tears. She looked up and met his rigid observation. Her beautiful eyes swam, like sapphire gems in the summer dew. A soft attraction was in their lucid rays. A melancholy smile, gave utterance to her faultering accents; and holding out the hand he had dropped, she gently, timidly, and tenderly articulated,

"De Montemar! Is it a mutual forgiveness? The hand that is now yours,

is a feeble pledge of the reconciliation of my heart!"

Louis did not approach her. He felt there was poison in that honeyed tongue; and though he came to commit himself to her for ever, he shrunk from being cozened again, by her charms or her art, to become a willing sacrifice. Could he now unite himself to her from any other impulse than hard, extorting duty, he felt how deep would be his degradation in his own thoughts; and he looked down to shut all these witcheries from his eyes.

After a minute's pause, while he stood painfully silent, she resumed in great emotion.

"What is it I have done, to deserve this harsh contempt? Oh, de Montemar, I have only proved myself, a fond, a feeble woman? For your sake, I gave way to the suggestions of a zeal, that would have carried me, as surely on the points of your enemies' daggers, as to

violate the letter which gave notice of your danger. — And thus am I repaid!"

With a suffocating gasp, she fell back into the chair on which she sat, and covered her face with her hands. Her whole frame was shook, as if life were indeed passing in agonizing throes from her body. The heart of man could not bear this. Could these mortal struggles be indeed dissimulation? — Whatever they might be, he could not look on them unmoved. He hastily approached her, and touched her hand. It was cold as death, but the plastic fingers closed on his agitated pressure. He trembled fearfully as he drew it away from her pale face, and beheld those matchless features convulsed with mental agony. Again her eyes opened upon him, as he hung over her. They fixed themselves on his face, with a languid, but pleading sorrow.

"Countess!" said he in a voice of anguish.

"Oh, call me Otteline—your Otteline!" cried she, impetuously grasping his arm, and hiding her face on it; "or, repeat that word, and release me, by killing me! But, I have survived your esteem, and why should I longer wish to live?"

His heart was subdued; and with tears starting from his own eyes, he exclaimed. "And is it possible that you do really love me?"

In that moment she was on her knees beside him. She clasped her hands; and looked up with such beaming beauty in every feature, such effulgence in her dewy eyes; that his were rivetted on her, as they would have been on a kneeling angel. Her lips appeared vainly to attempt sounds, that were too big for utterance; and, finding it impracticable, she turned towards him, and meeting the relenting expression of his anguished countenance, she smiled like heaven, and threw herself upon his breast.

Louis's heart heaved, and panted under the beautiful burden it sustained, as her sighs breathed on his cheek, and her tender tears bathed it; but, even in that moment of female victory, the excess of his emotion smote on that betrayed heart: and sensible to all the shame of his defeat, the rapid current in his veins, chilled to its former ice; and, with a tremor, far from ecstacy, he replaced her in her chair, and, almost unconsciously knelt down by her side.—But the attitude was dictated by his humbled sense of his own weakness, not, indeed, addressed to her; though he now believed she loved him; and while he looked on her agitated frame, he thought to himself:—

"If I cannot be happy myself, in the degradation to which I am doomed; at least, I do not leave you miserable! I will cherish, and protect; and, perhaps, recall that fond heart, to respect the principles of her husband!"

As he thus thought, he raised her hand to his lips; and, by that action, sealed to himself, the compact to be hers.

"My de Montemar!" murmured the Countess, feeling the import of this mute symbol. At this crisis, she heard a light step in the room. She looked round, and beheld the young Arch-duchess, standing pale, and fixed in the middle of the floor, with her eyes rivetted on the kneeling figure of Louis.

"The Princess!" exclaimed Otteline, in a voice of surprise, to Louis.

He started from his knee, and in the confusion of his feelings, retreated a few paces back. The gentle Maria Theresa smiled mournfully, but did not speak. Taking her hand, the Countess enquired her commands. The Princess still kept her eyes fixed on Louis, while, in a suppressed and unsteady voice, she answered her governess.

"My mother wishes to speak with

you. But, perhaps, had she known the Marquis was here, she would not desire you to leave him. God bless you, Marquis!" cried he, addressing him with agitated earnestness; "Be kind to my Otteline; for, when you are married, I I shall never see her more."

With the last words, she tore her eyes from his face, and threw herself into the bosom of the Countess. — Otteline looked her adieu to her lover, as in a tumult of undescribable disorder he hurried out of the room.

CHAP. III.

THOUGH Ripperda had made it a point with the Empress, that there should be no public intimation given of the proposed marriage of her favourite with his son, until the Queen's consent should arrive; it is probable Her Majesty might have sent it abroad by a private whisper, had she not seen the prudence of not stimulating the ill offices of the Princess de Waradin, and others, by any hint that the heir they courted for their daughters was promised to their proudest enemy.

When Elizabeth appeared to grant this silence as a favour, she insisted that it should not deter Louis from making his daily visits at the Altheim apartments; it was a respect due to the amiable forbearance of his future bride; and it

should always be in the presence of one of her confidential ladies, who was also a friend of the Countess.

Louis had now abandoned himself to his fate. But he had hardly given full sway to compulsive duty, and to the pleasing credulity that was re-awakened by compassion, before a thousand circumstances arose, to bid all his former repugnance return. The veil of imagination had been too forcibly rent from his eyes, ever to pass again between him and the object of his past idolatry. Unblinded by its delusions, every succeeding day shewed him clearer views of a character she vainly sought to disguise in assumed sentiment and delicacy. He perceived that her defects were not merely those of a perverting education, but of a radically warped mind. She had no spontaneous taste for moral greatness. Grandeur was her object; but it was that of station, of splendour, of dictating power. But still she loved him! loved him with a

devotion, a fondness, a bewitching fascination, that, at times, made him almost forget she was not the perfection that might have been the mistress of his soul. The beautiful deception never lasted many minutes; and his heart sighed for its partner, with a sterile consciousness that spoke of desolation, and dreariness, and solitude, through the whole of his after-life.

In moments like these, how often has a frequent quotation of his Pastor-Uncle occurred to him! "He that does a base thing in zeal for his friend, burns the golden thread that ties their hearts together. Such proof of love is conspiracy, not friendship!"

In the midst of this banishment of his hopes, from ever knowing the sweets of domestic comfort again, he received large packets from the dear home, where his best instructor presided, and where perfect happiness dwelt with humility and innocence. The counsel of the vener-

able man strengthened him in every disinterested rule of life; but the letters of his aunt, and his cousins, made his yearning heart overflow with rebellious regrets. The spirit of virtue and of tenderness breathed through every eloquent line that dropped from the pen of Cornelia.

"Ah, sister of my soul!" cried he, "I could fly with thee into the bosom of paradise! Here is all celestial purity, all divine aspirations! and I wished to wander from such a heaven! I longed to busy myself in the ambitious turmoil of the world! I am in that world; and, what is my atchievement? I find myself chained to the foot of a woman, my noble Cornelia would despise! I dare not confess to those who love and honour me, so degrading a disappointment of their hopes."

He turned to the gentle accents of his sweet Alice, breathed in a letter which had been wet with her grateful tears. Don

Ferdinand had complied with her petition. He had written to her mother, and avowed his love for her daughter. But throwing himself upon her pity, he implored her not to betray him to his father; and to assure her that he meant nothing disobedient to him, nothing clandestine to her in the demand, he released Alice from every vow, only reserving one claim on her compassion; to be allowed, at some future day, to throw himself at her feet; should the issue of certain circumstances, which still gave him the privilege to hope, hereafter induce his father to consent to his happiness.

Alice added that her mother had written to Don Ferdinand, that she pardoned what had passed, in consideration of the amplitude of the restitution; that she should preserve his blameable conduct from his father's eye, since it was repented of, and relinquished; but, that he must not suppose she yielded any encouragement to the continuance of his at-

tachment for her daughter, as she desired, that here all correspondence must cease.

"But," added Alice, "I know he will be true to what he has written; and I know I shall always love him dearer, for having taken that dreadful load from my heart. I am therefore quite sure I shall be content to await his father's consent, should it not come these many years. If you knew how happy I am now, since I can lift up my eyes in my dear mother's presence, and no longer feel ashamed at being pressed to the affectionate bosom of my blameless sister; you would be ready to pour as many tears of joy over the welcome of the little strayed lamb, as your kind heart shed floods of sorrow that melancholy night, when you found her so sadly wandered from her fold! Oh, my Louis, shall my gratitude to you ever find words to express it?"

Mrs. Coningsby's letter was not less energetic in thanks to her nephew for the judicious advice he had given to her

almost infant Alice; and for the activity of his exertions, to bring it to effect.

Louis smiled with glistening eyes, over these letters; for he was yet to learn the science of forgetting his own privations, in the fullness of others. The comparison now only aggravated the pangs in his breast; and rising from meditations that subdued, agitated, and maddened him, he rushed into crowds for that dissipation of thought he vainly sought in the exercises of study, or the fulfilment of his official duties.

Count Koninseg had lately introduced him to a house, in which he moved about at perfect ease, and met with every gratification to put his usual indifference to gay society, to the test. It was the abode of the Count d'Ettrees, a French adventurer of rank, whose wife and sister formed an attraction of wit and beauty, that rivalled every other assembly in Vienna. Under their magic auspices, every amusement was presented that

capricious fancy could desire or devise; and all lavished with a splendor of luxury, and an elegance of taste, which must soon have been exhausted, had not the fountain as it flowed returned by another channel to its native bed. Count d'Ettrees drew a revenue from that spirit for play, which his display of means excited in his guests.

Louis could never be induced to touch a card, or the dice-box, despising them both as sordid and senseless in principle; but found ample entertainment in the conversations of, indeed, an epitomised world. In these assemblies he saw persons from all countries and of all parties; but they were the chosen of all. For, to make the attraction the greater, so select was the Count in the rank and pretensions of those whom he admitted, it was deemed the highest proof of consequence, and of being *un bel esprit*, to be seen in this privileged circle. The Countess Claudine and her sister-in-law, Angelique d'Ettrees,

were ostensibly women of character, and really women of talent. But, while all around shewed a gorgeous pageant of amusement, wit, and genius; ruin lurked in the rooms, dedicated to play; infidelity and pride animated the philosophic colonade; poetry and Voltaire, Rousseau and bewildering sentiment, discoursed alike with talents, or with beauty; and vice sapped the unwary footstep whereever it trod.

At present, Louis was too self-absorbed by the struggles within him, to look deep into what was passing around him. It was sufficient for him that the varying intellectual enjoyments of the place, wrested him from his thoughts; and he gave himself up to all their power with a desperate avidity. He found his mind roused and exercised, by discussions with men of genius; he was delighted with the brilliant wit of the women, and the graceful frankness of their manners; and, perhaps, he was unconsciously propitiated

by the indirect flattery which was offered to himself, by the Countess and her sister, and which, being paid to his talents alone, he received without suspicion.

One evening, while he was thus engaged, he observed de Patinos and Duke Wharton enter together. It was the first time he had seen the Duke in the hotel d'Ettrees. The Spaniard descried Louis at the same instant, as he sat between the Countess and her sister Angelique. De Patinos drew his arm almost immediately from Wharton, and approached the group; but when near, he stopped, and turned away, casting a furious look at Ma'amselle d'Ettrees. She soon left her seat, and Louis afterwards saw her and the Spaniard in close conversation, while they, at times, turned round and glanced at him, as if he were the object of their discourse. De Patinos seemed very sullen, and Angelique very earnest. Soon after they parted,

with a sarcastic laugh from the Spaniard, and Ma'amselle mingled with the crowd.

Without any known cause of offence, a tacit acknowledgement of mutual dislike was shewn by Louis and de Patinos. For some time, their civilities had been merely confined to a cold bow at meeting in the *Palais d'Espagne*; when they met elsewhere, they passed as strangers. Baptista Orendayn was de Patinos's shadow in all things. But the conciliating manners of Louis, and (when he could emerge from his bosom regrets) his brilliant powers of amusement, had won the other Spaniards to court his society, and regard him with more confidence. This desertion from his party, incensed de Patinos the more; and a lurid fire burnt in his angry eye, whenever it encountered his admired rival.

As Louis left the side of the animated Countess d'Ettrees, and was passing away through the rooms, in a crowd of atten-

dants rather than of company, his shoulder pressed against that of Wharton. They turned their heads, and their eyes met. Louis snatched his friend's hand, and in the grasp, the embrace of his heart was felt. Wharton's luminous smile played on his lip, as he whispered.

"Something better than *the garden of the Hourii!* Socrates, or Alcibiades de Montemar?"

Louis did not answer, for at that moment he met the glance of Orendayn, who was just entering. He bowed with obsequious lowliness, both to him and the Duke, and passed on. Wharton and Louis had withdrawn their hands at the same instant they caught his eye; and the Duke turned into the circle. They were conscious however, to having been observed, but whether with a malicious or an indifferent observation, Louis did not pause to think on. Indeed, persons of all parties conversed so indiscriminately in this Elysian society, where nothing

seemed considered but the free enjoyment of all which was delightful in the human mind, that he saw nothing to apprehend in the simple circumstance of having been known to speak to Duke Wharton in so privileged a scene; and for any inferences, which the busy ignorance or ill nature of Orendayn might chuse to draw, it could be a matter of no consequence, as most of the Spanish grandees in Ripperda's suite conversed openly with Wharton; and Orendayn, though a nobleman, was known to be a character of contemptible craft and falsehood.

Thus, Louis continued to throw away the time that was once so precious to him. But it was no longer the friend, with which he joyed to "take sweet counsel," and lay open a bosom that knew no guests but hope and exultation. It was become a heavy monitor of remembrance, to remind him in solitary hours, of the blank his youthful infatuation and hard destiny had made of his

present and future days. His official duties done, his home saw him no more, till their recurrence recalled his steps, or the hour of rest demanded him to his pillow.

An hour, each morning, was passed in the Altheim apartments, where the Empress often met him with unvarying graciousness; and Otteline received him with as stationary smiles. But the vesture of art cannot elude the penetration of every day. In spite of her vigilance, he became master of her secret; and, no longer deceived into selfcomplacency, by the idea that she loved him, he saw himself consigned to be the prey of frigid, unfeeling, circumventing ambition. From her, he rushed to Princess de Waradin's, to his military associates, the *Hotel d' Ettrees*; or into any vortex that would hurry him from himself, and present him with other meditations than Otteline and his misery.

The Empress and Ripperda were now

sailing forward on the the unruffled sea of success. He had brought her to yield him such implicit confidence, that she exerted her own influence with the Emperor, to hasten the investiture of Don Carlos in the Duchies of Parma and Placentia. Charles promised that the official documents should immediately be finished; and the ceremony be performed with the earliest dispatch. He put into the Duke's hand, his final renunciation, for himself and his posterity, of all claims on the succession of Spain; and he gave him written bonds for the payment, at certain seasons, of a large debt of many millions, owed by the Empire to the Spanish monarchy. He also signed several new articles to the secret treaty; one of which was, to relinquish the Netherlands to Don Carlos, as a dowry with his intended bride.

About this time Cardinal de Giovenozzo arrived from Rome, on a special mission from the Pope; and with the usual cau-

tion of the reigning Pontiff, all parties were to be conciliated to the measures he proposed. To this end, his first proceeding was to collect round his table the foreign Ambassadors, and the leading men of the different factions at Vienna.

At one of these entertainments, it chanced that the Duke de Ripperda and the Duke of Wharton were placed at the same table. If there were any man in the world whom Ripperda absolutely hated, it was this rival of his politics; and he hated him, because he was the only man, who had ever effectively crossed them. But while he cherished this hatred, he would not own to himself that it was mixed with any fear of the talents he affected to despise. He, therefore, took no notice of the Duke at table, but by a stiff bow; and he would not, even have granted that, had it not been at the board of the representative of the Father of Christendom, where such mutual re-

cognition of universal brotherhood in the Catholic church, was a regular ceremonial.

During dinner, some observations were made by Wharton, respecting the balance of power in Italy, which extracted two or three angry flashes from the eye of Ripperda; but he disdained to appear to attend to any thing advanced by him, and continued, with an air of indifference, drinking wine with the British Ambassador, and conversing with the Cardinal at whose right hand he sat. The animated Wharton proceeded in his remarks, at the end of the table he occupied; and in a strain of argument and eloquence that gradually attracted every ear, until even Giovenozzo himself bowed without reply, to some passing observation of Ripperda, and bent forward to catch what Wharton was asserting relative to the Pontiff's rights, in the transfer of principalities in Italy.

This temporary triumph of the English

Duke, over the imposing presence of Ripperda, stung him to the quick; and, for a moment he laid open the wound, by the impatient scorn with which he glanced on the resistless speaker. The Portuguese minister, who sat next him, remarked on the powerful consequences of the last argument of Wharton. Ripperda contemptuously replied. —

"Wind is sometimes mistaken for thunder."

Wharton caught the words, and with a gay but pointed laugh, looked towards the top of the table.

"Jove wields both in his rod; and the lighter the stroke, the quicker the smart."

"When the bolt is launched against presumption," retorted Ripperda, "it harrows up the dirt that blinds the multitude."

Wharton smiled. "I have no ambition to be the glorious malefactor!"

And bowing to the Duke, the reference could not be mistaken. Some of

the company did not repress the answering smile that flickered on every lip. It was too much for the incensed pride of Ripperda, and starting from his chair he turned indignantly to the Cardinal.

"When Your Eminence understands the distinction between the accredited representative of the King of Spain, and the lurking emissary of a dethroned, and medicant Sovereign; then the Ambassador of His Catholic Majesty may appear where he is not to be insulted."

Every person had risen from their seats in consternation; and Giovenozzo, not the least alarmed of the party, seized the Duke's arm, and began a confused apology for the attention he had paid to Wharton; and even attempted an excuse for the English Duke.

"I beg Your Eminence, not to trouble yourself with my apology," cried the unruffled Wharton; — "I meant all I said. And, I am obliged to the candour of the Spanish Ambassador, for so publickly de-

claring the distinction that is indeed between us! He is the representative of a King in the plenitude of power; at the head of the fountain of riches and honours; and the stream flows bounteously! I am the lurking emissary of a dethroned and mendicant monarch: but it has not yet been my good fortune to play the successful *Gaberlunzie* in the courts of rival sovereigns, or to beg alms for my Prince, at the gate of the Duke de Ripperda!"

Ripperda, turned on him with an eye of flame. His soul was on fire; and, at that moment insensible to every thing but the expression of his burning hatred, he sternly exclaimed:

"Were not Duke Wharton as impotent as he is vain, I might stoop to chastise what offends me: but I pardon, what I pity."

"And I," replied the Duke, "am proud to imitate so great an example!"

Ripperda, almost beside himself with

wrath, struck the hilt of his sword fiercely with his hand. Wharton turned gaily on his heel, and asked some indifferent question of the Duke de Richelieu.

The Cardinal followed Ripperda out of the apartment. Alarmed at the consequence of suffering him, who seemed to hold the balance of Christendom in his hands, to quit his roof unappeased, he drew the enraged Duke into another room, and vainly tried to assuage his fury. Ripperda's pride was in arms, at being so insolently braved before all the nations of Europe, in the persons of their Ambassadors. He was angry with himself, at having shewn himself susceptible of insult from the man, it was his policy to teach others to despise; and in a disorder of mind he had never known before, he poured on the Cardinal all his resentments against the Duke and himself. He saw that nothing could redeem him to the vantage ground he had so intemperately abandoned, but an

ample and formal apology from Wharton; and, he told Giovenozzo, he must force the English Duke to make that restitution; else he should act from a conviction that they had been invited together, to insult the politics of Spain in the person of its minister.

The Cardinal feared Ripperda; and flattered himself, that he might work upon the zeal and good-nature of Wharton, to serve the interest of His Holiness by this concession. When Ripperda arose to withdraw, on being informed that his carriage was ready, Giovenozzo attended him to the foot of the stairs, and absolutely promised to bring him the demanded apology next day.

But unfortunately, the company in the dining-room, supposing that Ripperda had been sometime gone, moved to depart also. In the hall, Wharton again met his proud antagonist; and, in the instant when most unhappily the spirit of discord seemed to have extended itself to

their respective domestics. Wharton's carriage and that of Ripperda had drawn up at the same moment; and their coachmen were disputing the right to maintain the door. From words, they had recourse to whips.

"A comfortable way of settling a controversy!" exclaimed Wharton, who stepped forward, to order his servant to draw off; but Ripperda, who felt the late scene festering in his heart, and supposing a different intention, and a new affront in the Duke's prompt advance; cried aloud, with an air of derision:— "Less haste, my Lord! or the whip of my coachman, may chance to brush Your Grace's skirts!"

"If it did," replied Wharton, with a glance that told he understood the remark; "I should know where to repay the impertinence."

Ripperda was again in a blaze.

"Insolent!" cried he.

Wharton, who had checked his ad-

vancing step, on the first word from his antagonist, now leaned towards him; and whispered:

"The lion may be chafed beyond its bearing! It is possible for the father of Louis de Montemar to go too far with the Duke of Wharton!"

This assumption of forbearance to him, Ripperda felt as the climax of insult; and starting back, with all the pride and resentments of his nature rushing through his veins, he touched the hilt of his sword with a significant glance, and in a subdued voice, replied:

"If you do not shroud cowardice under the name of my son, you will follow me!"

This had cleft the threatened cord; and, in one moment the two Dukes had vanished through the colonades of the hall, into an interior and lonely court of the building.

In the same instant they found themselves alone, the drawn sword of Rip-

perda was in his hand, and he called on Wharton to defend himself. There was no time for further forbearance or parley. Wharton had hardly warded off the first thrust of his determined antagonist, before a second and a third were repeated with the quickness of lightning. The glimmer of the lamps, which lit this little solitary quadrangle, marked each movement of the weapon with a gleam on its polished steel; and Wharton continued rather to defend than attack. But a noise of approaching steps, withdrawing his attention for a moment from his guard, a desperate lunge from the infuriate arm of his adversary, ran him through the breast, and he fell. The blood sprang over his hand, as he laid it on the wound.—His proud destroyer stood confounded at the sight.

"I forgive you my death!" cried Wharton, "but I guess your son will not. Rash Duke, to you he dies in me!"

The tongue of Ripperda clove to the roof of his mouth; and in the next instant the Cardinal and the French Ambassador appeared at his side. As the bloody scene presented itself, Giovenozzo shut the door, and bolted it behind him, to prevent further entrance. Richelieu hurried to the prostrate Duke, and spoke to him. Wharton looked up, and in hardly articulate accents, said, "bear witness, Richelieu, that I acquit the Duke de Ripperda. He was in wrath, and I provoked him. Let not his high character be dishonoured by my death."

This was the first time that Ripperda's lofty consciousness of consistent greatness had ever shrunk before the eye of man; he could not brook the strange humiliation, and with asperity he haughtily exclaimed; "my honour does not require protection. I know that I have been intemperate and rash. But let the world know it as it is: I have done nothing that I am not prepared to defend."

Wharton raised himself on his arm to reply; but in the exertion he fainted and fell.

The Cardinal, (in consternation at the report he must give to the Pope of such an affray under his holy roof,) implored his implacable guest to pass into the oratory, which was on the opposite side of the court, and await him there, till the French Ambassador and he had borne the insensible Wharton to a place where his state might be examined.

Ripperda complied in silence; and Giovenozzo, wrapping his scarlet scarf around the bleeding body of Wharton, between him and Richelieu, bore him round the back of the oratory, into one of the penitential cells. His Eminence having been a brother of the Order of Mercy, understood surgery; and staunching the Duke's wound, so as to leave him for a short time in safety, though still insensible; he came forth with Richelieu. The French Duke gave him his word of

honour, that if Ripperda could be induced to keep silence on this terrible affair, whether Wharton lived or died, the secret should never escape from him.

Richelieu had his own views in this secrecy; and took his part, in returning to the hall to quench suspicion there. Those who had lingered to know the issue, with what degree of credence suited them, listened to his hasty account, that he and the Cardinal had just arrived in time to laugh at their zeal; for Wharton had given a merry explanation of his ill-timed raillery to the Duke; laying it to the account of the Cardinal's bright Falernian; and Ripperda, with the dignity of a great mind, having accepted the apology; no more was said about it.

All appeared to believe this statement, for there was no disputing the *word of honour* of an ambassador! — But there were a few drops of blood on the point ruffles and bosom of Richelieu; which, being observed by Count Routemberg

alone, told him a different story; and he remained a few minutes behind the rest. When the hall was cleared of all but himself and the French minister, he did not speak, but pointed significantly to the testimonies on the ruffles and frill. Richelieu was hurrying out some excuse, invented on the moment; but Routemberg, (who was president of the Emperor's council,) whispered something in the embassador's ear. They both smiled, shook hands, and parted.

When Ripperda returned to his palace, he entered the room where his son was completing some especial communications to Spain. Louis put them into the hand of his father. As he did so, he beheld that form and face which, a few hours before, had left him gallantly habited, and bright in lofty complacency; now discomposed, pale and haggard. He gazed on the alteration with surprise, while Ripperda seemed to read the dispatch with a moveless eye.

"It will do," said he, laying it on the table. He mechanically took up one of the candles, and was turning away to his own chamber. Louis could keep silence no longer.

"You are ill, my Lord!" cried he, "or something terrible has happened!"

"What is there terrible to have happened?" returned Ripperda, pausing as he approached the door, and looking on his son.

"Nothing, that I can guess," replied Louis, "but your looks, my father, are not as when you left me!"

"How often have I told you, de Montemar," returned the Duke, "never to guess at a stateman's looks! I have come from a party of many vizards, and you must not be surprised that mine has changed in the contact. I am well; let that satisfy you."

With these words the Duke withdrew.

CHAP. IV.

Morning reported all that had passed at the table of the Cardinal. What happened in the hall, was slightly mentioned; for little of that had been generally heard; but an account was circulated, that notwithstanding the good offices of Giovenozzo had produced a shew of reconciliation, some serious consequences might be anticipated.

When Ripperda entered to his son the next day, he perceived by his pallid hue and averted eyes, that he had heard something of the affray. Without preface, he abruptly asked, what had been told him of the Duke of Wharton's behaviour the preceding night. The informant of Louis had shaped the story under a flattering veil for his father; and the anxious

son had heard nothing but of the insolence and scoffing speeches of the English Duke; and of the dignified forbearance of Ripperda.

The blood that accused his friend in his heart, rushed to his face, when he repeated what had been told him.

"And how," demanded Ripperda, "do you mean to act towards the man who could so taunt, deride, and insult your father?"

"Though he twice preserved my life," returned Louis, "he has now wounded me in a more vital part; and I shall ever after regard him as a stranger."

Ripperda shook his head, and laid his hand on his son's arm. "And what would be your decision, were I to reverse the charge?"

Louis looked on the flushed countenance of his father.

"Man is fallible, Louis!" cried he, "and, after thirty years of undeviating self-control ——" Ripperda broke off,

in the acknowledgements he believed it magnanimous to make, and in the bitterness of his mortification thrusting his son from him, he exclaimed, — "How must I hate the man who burst my fettered passions, and, for one desperate moment, made me their victim, and his sport!"

Louis did not speak, in his astonishment at what he hoped would end in some acquittal of his friend; but the pleasurable feeling was quickly smothered by this tremendous burst from his father; and he saw revived before him, the terrible moment in which the Sieur Ignatius clenched his dagger at his breast. Without a word, or a look upward, he stood, awefully expecting him to proceed.

After a minute's pause, the Duke turned desperately calm to his son.

"Discredit the vile flatterers, who would tell you, that Wharton alone was the aggressor. We met like hostile bulls, and wonder not that we should plunge at once upon each other's horns! Respect

him still, for he is a noble enemy; but I am his, for ever."

Louis threw himself at his father's feet.

"My gracious father! oh that the visible pleadings of my heart, that its dearest blood, could make you regard him as a friend!"

There are hearts that cannot bend where they have injured. Ripperda's was of this proud mettle; and looking down on his kneeling son, he exclaimed:—"Impossible! that has passed between us which has made our enmity eternal. Your conduct in the affair I leave to yourself. But I can trust to you, that you will not compromise your father's honour by broadly shewing fellowship with his most open enemy."

Louis pressed his father's hand to his lips; that hand which was hardly washed from the stain of Wharton's blood! But he was ignorant of that part of the horrid tale; and the Duke, in a milder voice, bade him rise.

"You will not soon be called upon to

act a Roman part between your father and your friend!" continued he. "I saw Cardinal de Giovenozzo this morning; and he tells me that Wharton has disappeared."

This information was balm to Louis, as it seemed to promise a peaceful termination to so threatening an affair. That his friend had withdrawn, was a pledge of his pacific wishes; and, with a lightened countenance, Louis rose from his knee.

Ripperda said no more; and his son was left to his meditations.

Whatever details he afterwards heard of the affair, were so confused and contradictory, he could form no certain criterion, which was most to blame. But Giovenozzo at last put all to silence, by a declaration, that he should deem all further discussion of a transaction which passed under his roof, as an impertinent interference with his responsibility. He pronounced, that neither the Duke de

Ripperda, nor the Duke of Wharton, could have acted otherwise than they did, consistently with their own dignities; and he insinuated to Louis, that a third person, whom he could not mention, was the origin of a dissention, which had ended in a manner to reflect honour on his father. The Cardinal then hinted, that Wharton had vanished on some occult mission, to circumvent the Italian investiture.

"And so," added the smiling ecclesiastic, "I doubt not, he seeks to revenge the triumphant magnanimity of his transcendant rival."

From all this, though Louis could not learn much to criminate his friend, he gained enough to impress him with an encreased conviction of his father's greatness of mind; that a generosity, something like his own romantic nature, had impelled the few words of self-blame which had dropped from him in their first, and, indeed, only conference on the

subject. After that discussion, it was never resumed; and the whole matter dying away from people's tongues and memories, Ripperda appeared in every circle as usual, bright and serene as the cloudless sky in midsummer.

The favour in which he was held at Court was made more apparent than ever; and though the dispatches which were to bring the royal assent to Louis's marriage, seemed unaccountably delayed; yet to shew that no doubt remained in Elizabeth's mind, of the father and son's sincerity, she permitted the solemn installment of the latter in the name of Don Carlos, into the reversion of the two long-disputed Italian dukedoms.

This important rite was just completed, when a packet was put into Ripperda's hand from Spain. It brought his recall to the council of his sovereign.

The various objects of the treaty with Vienna had so alarmed the other kingdoms of Europe, that the cabinet of

Madrid was besieged day and night by the clamour of their respective envoys. Grimaldo, the prime minister, enfeebled by age, and adverse to the new system of politics, had begged to resign his office. Philip granted the petition; and now sent for Ripperda, to take the supreme chair himself; and, (in the King's own words,) to consummate the greatness of Spain. Their Majesties desired that the Marquis de Montemar should be left *Charge des Affaires;* and that the Duke himself would immediately set forth on his return.

Ripperda examined farther into the packet, to find the expected consent for his son's marriage; but it was not there; and no notice taken of the application he had made for it. On questioning the messenger, whether he had omitted to bring any part of his charge, the man told him that a special courier, which was Castanos, had been dispatched a few days before him; and he was not less sur-

prised than alarmed, to find him not arrived, as he knew he brought dispatches of great value.

The disappointment Elizabeth sustained in this procrastination of the marriage of her favourite, was absorbed for a time in her regrets for the recall of her friend. Louis could think only of his father's glorious summons, to perfect the happiness of his country; and when, in the midst of his preparation for departure, Castanos did arrive, this affectionate son, hardly cast a thought on the reprieve, that he brought no dispatches.

Castanos told Ripperda, he had been beset on the road, in the mountains of Carinthia, by a band of armed men, who rifled and left him for dead. A poor herdsman found him, and took him to his hut; where, having recovered strength to pursue his journey, he came forward, to apprise his master that he had lost the dispatches, and with them a casket of jewels from Don Carlos to the Arch-duchess.

The bruises on Castanos's person bore witness to the truth of his assault; and the Empress and her favourite, were obliged to resign themselves to await a courier from Ripperda himself, when he should have arrived in Spain.

On the third day after the declaration of his recall, Ripperda took his official leave, and presented his son in his new office. At parting, the Emperor invested the Duke with the Star of the *Golden Fleece*; in which order, he was the only exception to an undeviating line of Sovereign Princes. The Empress presented him with her picture set in brilliants; and when the Court broke up, she told him to follow her, to receive the farewell commands of her daughter.

Louis waited in the anti-room, while his father entered the apartment, where the still invalid Princess sat on a sofa, supported by the Countess Altheim. Louis could not help seeing the lovely group, through the half-obscuring dra-

peries of the open door. The Princess was pale and thin; and, though dressed superbly, seemed fitter for her chamber.

When Ripperda drew near, a faint colour tinged her cheek.

"The Duke approaches you, my love," said the Empress, "to bear your commands to Don Carlos; and to receive from your hands, the portrait of his future bride."

"Where is it?" said the Princess, turning hurryingly to Otteline.

The Countess drew a beautiful miniature from its case, which lay on the sofa near her, and presented it to her young charge. Maria Theresa held it in her hand, and looked on it a few seconds with a languid smile.

"It is very pretty, and very fair!" said she, "Do not you think so, Duke?" added she, putting it into Ripperda's hand, who received it on his knee; "But tell the Spanish Prince, I shall be much fairer before he looks on it."

And then she cast down her eyes, and sat perfectly still and silent.

"What means my love, by so strange a message?" enquired the Empress.

The Princess did not answer, but merely sighed, and looked round, uneasily. Elizabeth repeated the question, with enquiries, whether she wished to send the Prince any thing else, that she looked about so searchingly.

"O, no," replied the young creature, shaking her head, and rising from her chair; "I only wish to give this rosary to the Duke of Ripperda, for himself;—himself, alone!" cried she, and clasping her fair hands, as she dropped it into his, she turned hastily round with a glowing cheek, and flew out of the apartment.

At the moment of her last raising her eyes, she had caught a glimpse of Louis, as he stood in a distant corner of the other room half concealed in its draperies, but regarding with a pitying eye the resigned victim, who, like himself,

was to be offered up to the ambition of others.

In evident emotion, Elizabeth put her hand on the arm of Ripperda, and withdrawing with him into a part of the room out of sight,—Otteline advanced to his son.

Louis's soul was full of sympathy for the interesting Maria Theresa; the import of whose melancholy message to Don Carlos, he well defined: and his compassion for such thraldom, extending to himself, made him a very unfit companion for his own future bride. He could have wept over the sweet, and faded Theresa; while the blooming cheek and rosy smile of Otteline, at such a season! withered him as she approached; and he stood sad and absorbed, after he had given her the ceremonious salute of the day.

The Countess had found her account in not striving to change these fitful moods in her lover. But while she sup-

pressed the risings of her haughty soul, she often said within herself. "Disdainful tyrant! — My hour is coming! — When I am your wife, then you shall feel what you have done by trampling on the slave, who only waits a few magic words, to be your sovereign!"

For the whole of the remainder of the day, Ripperda's house was crowded with ministers, foreign embassadors, and persons of various descriptions. It was past midnight, before the last of these levies was dismissed; in the midst of all of which, Louis had seen his father like a presiding deity. He seemed the umpire of Europe; and as if the monarchs of each realm stood before him in the persons of their delegates, to hear from his lips the fiat of their weal or woe. To all he was as gracious as he was peremptory: and while he asserted the greatness of Spain, and proclaimed her claims in the various quarters of the globe, he breathed nothing but peace and pro-

sperity to the nations that sought her amity.

Ripperda did not go to rest the whole night. He remained until morning, instructing his son on the objects entrusted to his completion. Louis received these lessons as distinctly, as a mirror receives the image of the face that looks on it; but where that fled, these were stationary, and remained indelibly stamped on his mind.

With the rising orb of day, the travelling equipage was announced. Ripperda rose from his seat. Louis started up also, with an emotion to which he would not give voice.

"I have spoken of all that relates to your public duty;" resumed the Duke, "I wish your private concerns were in as fair a prospect. But in my last conference with the Empress, I found myself obliged to pledge her my word, (and to seriously intend its performance,) to suffer no hesitation in the Queen's con-

sent to your marriage with the favourite. But cheer yourself under the sacrifice. Believe, that in giving Otteline your name, you perform an act of self-devotion, of a consequence to the interests of your country, I cannot now explain, but it is worthy the price. Like your father, my son, you must live to virtue alone; live for mankind; live to future ages!—Do this, and all common concerns will be lost in the imperishable glory!"

Louis threw himself on his father's bosom.

"For this once!" cried he, in the full voice of filial affection; "For this once, let me be pressed to the heart that inspires me to virtue! The heart that I most honour and love in the world!—Oh, my father, may I be like unto thee; and all minor enjoyments shall be nothing to me!"

The Duke strained him to his breast. Louis's cheek was wet with tears; but

his own flowed ; so he knew not whether his father's mingled there. Ripperda strove to break from him, with an averted face. Louis clasped his hands, as he sunk on his knees ; "Bless me, Oh, my father !" cried he, "Bless me, ere you leave me to this dangerous world !"

The Duke paused, and looked for a moment on the bent head of his son.

"Bless you, Louis !" said he, "But be firm in yourself, and you will need no beadsman's orison."

Louis hardly heard the latter sentence, in his growing emotions ; and pressing the hem of his father's garment to his lips, it slid from his hand as the Duke drew it away, and disappeared through the door.

CHAP. V.

RIPPERDA was gone. Day rolled over day; and the most splendid preparations continued to be privately made for the betrothment of Maria Theresa, and the marriage of Otteline; but the Empress had still to count the hours with impatience, until the ceremonial consent should arrive.

Meanwhile, the conduct of Louis, in the management of the intricate affairs confided to him, gained the universal suffrage of the foreign ministers with whom he conferred; who united in saying, that had he been the son of the obscurest individual, his talents and strict fair dealing, would have ensured him every honour that he now received as the son of Ripperda.

Routemberg, the prime minister, af-

fected to treat him with peculiar confidence; and he was with him when a packet arrived from his father. He opened it; and it contained the very dispatches which had been taken by the robbers from Castanos. The Duke accompanied them with a few lines, dated from a post-house in Carinthia, saying, that he had recovered them in a very extraordinary manner, which he should describe in his first letters from Spain; but he now lost no time in dispatching them forward to Vienna, under the care of Martini.

Subsequent considerations made Ripperda withhold this adventure; but it was briefly as follows.

Just as the Spanish suite had passed into the mountainous tracks of Carinthia, and Ripperda had entered the solitary post-house in the forest of Clagenfurt, he was followed into his apartment by the master of the house. The man told him in a mysterious manner, that a

person in a strange foreign habit, had waited for His Excellency some hours in an upper chamber; and he now requested to speak with the Duke for a few minutes on a subject of consequence; but that it must be in a room without light.

Ripperda desired that the person might be told, it was not his custom to admit strangers to his presence, and never to suffer dictation in the manner he was to receive them.

In a few seconds the inkeeper returned with a charged pistol, which he presented to Ripperda, with this message. " The person who sent that, was as little accustomed to arbitrary decisions as the Duke de Ripperda. He had matters of moment to impart to him. If he did not chuse to receive them on the stranger's terms, — well, — and they should rest with himself; but if he decided otherwise, he must admit the communication under the obscurity of total darkness."

If he suspected personal danger, he was at liberty to stand on his guard during the interview, either with his sword or that pistol."

There was something in the boldness of the demand, and the gift of the pistol, that stimulated the curiosity of Ripperda. He could protect his life from a single arm; and from a more supported treachery he had an armed guard in his suite.

Without further hesitation, he told the innkeeper to return the pistol to him from whom he had brought it; to take the lamp from the room, and to introduce the stranger.

When the door re-opened, a man was let in, the outline of whose figure and apparel the Duke caught a glimpse of, in the reflected light from the outer chamber. The person was tall, seemed in a military garb, by the clangor of a heavy sword, in an iron scabbard, striking against the door-post as he approached. But there was a great involvement of

drapery about him; and the black plumage of his head brushed the door-top, as he stooped and entered. The door closed on his back; and the twain were in total darkness.

"Your business, Sir?" demanded Ripperda, with a tone of superiority.

"It is to confer an obligation on the proudest man in Christendom," returned a hoarse and rough voice, in as lofty a strain. "Ten days ago your courier was stopped in these mountains, and robbed of his travelling case. The contents are a padlocked casket and a sealed bag. It fell in my way; and I restore them to you."

"Brave stranger!" returned Ripperda, "whoever you are, accept my thanks. Point but the way, and the proudest man in Christendom would feel himself prouder in being allowed to repay such an obligation."

"I doubt it not," replied the stranger, sarcastically; "but my taste is not man's

gratitude. If it were, I should starve in this generation."

"Try the man on whom you have just conferred this favour! Pardon me, but by your language, you appear to have been outraged by mankind? Let me make restitution? I love a brave spirit, and could employ and reward it."

The stranger laughed scornfully.

"Mine is Esau's birth-right, and I have employed it manfully; witness this sword!" cried he, striking it down with his hand upon the hilt, and rattling its steel against the floor; "witness that bag of policy and riches I despise; which the Duke de Ripperda now holds in his hand as the gift of an outlaw and an enemy!"

"You are a fearless man," returned the Duke, "and have proved yourself an honourable one! You know my power. Name the country that has outlawed you, and I will obtain your pardon. Name

the price to make you my friend, and I will pay it."

"Ripperda," replied the stranger, "I leave that behind, which will direct you where to find its owner. If you use it wisely, it may be Ulysses' hauberk; if you reject it, the shirt of Nessus were a cooler winding-sheet! — Farewell."

Before Ripperda could unclasp his lips to reply, the stranger had opened the door, and passed through it like a gliding shadow.

The moment he had disappeared, the Duke called for lights, and the landlord brought them in.

When Ripperda was alone, he examined the case his rugged visitor had put into his hand. He broke the seals of the bag, in which he found the key of the casket; and on looking over the contents of both, missed none of the jewels, whose answering list was amongst the dispatches. The jewels were a magnificent present

from Don Carlos to the Arch-duchess Maria Theresa; and a necklace, inscribed by the Queen's own hand for Countess Otteline Altheim; but amongst none of the papers was there any trace of the expected consent. The present of the necklace seemed a presumptive proof that Her Majesty did not intend to withhold it; but, until it was formally given, Ripperda could add no further sanction from himself. However, to inform the Empress, as soon as possible, of even this promise of Isabella's acquiescence, he lost no time in summoning two or three of the young noblemen, who, wearied of Vienna, had chosen to return with him to Spain. He told them of his having recovered the dispatches, by the gift of the leader of the banditti he believed; and of his intention to forward them that night to Vienna, if they had any commands to send by the messenger he should dispatch.

Don Baptista Orendayn, who was pre-

sent, eagerly offered a suggestion that Martini ought to be the messenger, as the most trusty person; and Ripperda, pleased with his zeal, having ordered a sufficient suite to attend whomever he should select, adopted his advice, and saw the faithful Italian set off on his return to the Austrian capital, just as the dawn opened behind the farthest mountains.

His equipages were getting ready for the prosecution of his own journey; and, not having found any letter or memorandum from the stranger himself, in the case which had held the casket; he was wondering to what mysterious manner of tracing him he could have referred, since none certainly had presented itself, when the landlord entered the apartment; he carried a scarlet mantle in his arms, and laying it on the table before the Duke,

"My Lord," said he, "the person you saw last night, left this cloak in the chamber where he waited for you. He told

me to bring it to Your Excellency in the morning."

Ripperda's eye fell upon the mantle, — it was discoloured a dark red in many places, he nodded his head, and the man withdrew. Ripperda then took it from the table, supposing a name or a direction might be affixed to it; but on the ample folds disengaging themselves, he started with a shudder. — He had seen it before! — It was marked with the keys of Saint Peter! — It was embroidered on the shoulder with the arms of Giovenozzo! — It was stained with the blood of Duke Wharton!

Ripperda dropped it from his hand.

" Accursed Wharton!" exclaimed he, now recollecting, in the disguised tones of the stranger's voice, some notes of the Duke's, " this insult shall not be pardoned! I am not to be cajoled nor menaced into peace with you, my most detested, most insolently triumphing enemy. We have once measured

swords!" and his eye glanced on the blood-stained scarf; "when they next meet, the blow may be surer!"

Wharton's graces of mind, body, and political management, formed the only character which had ever peered with that of his haughty rival. He was the only man who had ever foiled Ripperda by secret machination. He had made him feel that he had an equal, that he might have a superior. He had discovered that the all-glorious boast of Spain was not exempt from the infirmities of common men. He had wrought him to commit an injury, and he had stood between him and the world's cognizance. To be so humbled in the knowledge of any living being, was the vultures of Prometheus to the proud heart of Ripperda. Wharton, by the present action, had declared his triumph, — had presumed to promise, or to threat! and the hatred of his enemy was now wound up to a height that could know no declen-

sion, till its cause was laid low in the silence of death.

A wood-fire burnt on the hearth of the room Ripperda occupied. He thrust the Cardinal's mantle into it, and stood over the smouldering cloth, till the whole was consumed to ashes.

Comprehending that Wharton must have set his emissaries to way-lay the Spanish dispatches, merely to afford him the opportunity he had boasted, of conferring an obligation on his rival, Ripperda assuaged his enraged thoughts by devising schemes of revenge as he rapidly pursued his journey towards the seat of his power.

He met with no accident nor obstacle, till on the night of the 25th of July. The tops of the hills were laden with thunder-clouds, and the turbid atmosphere laboured with the stifling Sirocco. His long train of attendants had dispersed themselves amongst the narrow and shelving roads, which traverse that

line of the Appenines, which form the mural diadem of the gulph of Genoa. Ripperda's equipage wound down a long and twisting defile between two precipitous rocks. The intricacies and abrupt turns in the road separated him from his immediate followers. It was the darkest hour of twilight, when there was just enough of gleam from the lurid sky, to shew the outline of objects.

As the Duke's carriage turned a jutting cliff, he found it suddenly stop, and then heard a volley of oaths from his drivers, mingled with more direful imprecations from strange voices. While he was letting down the glass to enquire the cause, the lash of whips accompanied the mutual swearing, and he felt the struggle of his horses to force their way forward. The next moment a pistol was fired at their head, and a deep groan shewed it had taken too true an aim. As the window dropped, Ripperda saw the wounded postilion fall on the neck of his horse.

But he saw no more. The carriage door was instantly opened, and before he could snatch a pistol from his own belt, he was dragged from the seat by the collected strength of several arms. Having thrown him upon the flinty way, one man of colossal bulk, cast himself upon the prostrate and struggling Duke, and kneeling upon his body, with both his knees, coolly and determinately put a pistol close to the temple of his victim. Ripperda had now grasped his own weapon, and with one hand, striking aside the arm of his antagonist, the pistol went off; where that ball fell he knew not, but with his other hand, at the same moment he lodged the contents of his own pistol in the heart of the ruffian. The wretch tumbled aside, with a convulsive recoil, and was no more.

His comrades, deeming the Duke's destruction sure, were rifling the carriage, while others were posted at the entrance of the defile, to prevent a rescue from his

attendants. One of them turning round at the double report of the pistols, and seeing his coadjutor thrown motionless off the body of Ripperda, who sprang on his legs, alarmed his fellows, and rushed towards their prey. The Duke saw he must sell his life dearly, for he was determined never to yield it to such base assailants, and drawing his sword, set his back against the precipice, and held them at bay. But the strength of his arm, and the bravery of his heart could not have defended him long against their determined attack.

The men, whose poniards his sword parried, had recourse to fire-arms, and two pistols were fired at him.

"He stands yet!" cried one of the ruffians, "give him another volley."

A volley did sound, and instantly; but it came from the rocks above, and three of the villains fell. The rest drew back a few paces in surprise, and in the moment several men

jumped from the shelving precipice to the side of the Duke. The conflict closed, and became desperate. Ripperda was bleeding fast from the graze of a ball on his head; and though he assisted his defenders with a resolute heart, he was nearly fainting. A party of his new friends had cleared the entrance of the road, for the approach of his followers; and the discomfited ruffians, foreseeing further contention must end in their utter destruction, laid hands suddenly on their wounded and dead; and throwing them over a chasm in the precipice, were presently lost themselves amongst the bushy recesses of the perpendicular rocks.

The persons who had come thus opportunely to the rescue of Ripperda, assisted his servants to bind his wound; and to place him, now as insensible as his lifeless postillion, in the carriage. Martini was on his mission to Vienna; but another valet was put into the

chariot to support the Duke. The man respectfully enquired of him who appeared the superior of the group, what name he should say, when his master should ask for his brave deliverer?

"Some day, I will tell it to him, myself;" returned he, "meanwhile I shall exchange swords, as a memento of this hour."

He closed the carriage door, and ordered the trembling postilions to drive on. The valet, calling from the chariot window, implored his further protection; he nodded his head in acquiescence; and, with his train, escorted the alarmed party safe through the defile. As it opened into the champaigne country, the remainder of the suite, under the leading of Don Baptista Orendayn, approached from another road. At this sight, the gallant travellers turned their horses' heads, and leaving Ripperda to his friends, galloped across the plain in an opposite direction.

The Duke had recovered only to a dreamy recollection. But his medical staff having gone before him to Genoa, when he arrived there, his wound was properly dressed; and a day's repose left him no apparent effects of his adventure, but the bandage on his head; and his regret, that such immediate insensibility had deprived him of the opportunity of thanking his deliverer. He spoke to Orendayn about his gallant preserver: but the young Spaniard could give no account of him; as he was lost among the mountains at the time of the attack. He, however, informed Ripperda, that while enquiring his way, the Alpine cottagers had told him of a noted banditti, which prowled in their neighbourhood in search of prey; and he did not doubt these assailants were the very troop. He lamented with great bitterness, that the stupidity of his guides, should have led him so far astray, when his patron was in danger; and

envied those who had come to his rescue, with many encomiums on their timely valour.

Ripperda was pleased with the exchange of the swords; as the fabrick of the one which had been left in the place of his, was of a fashion that proved its owner to be a gentleman, as well as a brave man. Strange as it may seem, the former citizen of Groningen, had now imbibed so much of Spanish prejudice, he would have been sorry to have thought that his eagle-crested rapier, might now be suspended at the side of a man of ignoble blood, even though the hand that hung it there was that of his deliverer.

On the morning of Ripperda's recommencing his journey, he put the sword into his belt. It had once saved his life! And he wore, and wielded it hereafter, in many a menacing and perilous scene.

CHAP. VI.

The Duke de Ripperda no more troubled his son with a narrative of this attack in the Appenines, than he satisfied his curiosity, by the promised relation of the adventure in Carinthia. The one passed from his mind, as it was attended by no apparent consequences; and the other, though it lived in it, was connected with Wharton, and the memory of a transaction he would gladly obliterate for ever.

Martini set out to rejoin his master, as soon as he had delivered his trust; and when Louis opened it, he found the Queen's commands to himself, that he should be the representative of Don Carlos, in the betrothing ceremony with the Arch-duchess. He sighed as he laid the

papers on the table; for he thought the task would be a harder one than even his own immolation.

"Ah," cried he, "can I have a hand in striking the sacrificial knife into the innocent lamb, that shrinks so pleadingly from the horrid altar!"

The Empress was not satisfied with the Queen's slowness in expressing her consent to the marriage of Louis; and the less so, as she wanted to have had it solemnised immediately. Otteline was summoned to Brunswick, to attend the dying moments of her father; and Elizabeth would have been glad to have secured Louis eternally her's, before so many leagues should divide them.

The day that had been fixed upon between the four illustrious parents of the intended royal pair, for the celebration of the affiancing ceremony, now approached. All the preparations were ready; and the adversaries to the mutual aggrandisement of Austria and of

Spain, beheld these pledging nuptials with despair. Ripperda, with whom the whole scheme had originated, seemed omnipotent.

Indeed the splendour of his proceedings in his new office of Prime Minister of Spain, realized the visions of all its former statesmen. He moved forward with a magnificence of design, which surpassed Alberoni in grandeur, and Cardinal Ximenes in boldness of spirit, and determined execution. The eyes of Europe were fixed on the mighty hand, which moved all their interests as the interests of his own country prompted; and while a feeble prince sat on the throne, the minister bid fair to make the Spanish monarchy as vast and dominant as under the sceptre of the Emperor Charles. The pragmatic sanction, and a marriage between a Spanish prince and the heiress to the German empire, might accomplish this, and other plans, which were bursting to their ripening.

But the withering mildew was now breathed forth, that was intended to blast this goodly harvest.

On the night in which Wharton was carried, even as a dead man, out of the mansion of Giovenozzo, the Cardinal had him carefully transported to a monastery in the neighbourhood, where he slowly recovered to life and strength. He learnt enough from his only visitors, Giovenozzo and de Richelieu, to know that Ripperda, not merely had disdained his justification and his friendship, but persisted in every circle, to treat his name with not less pointed, though silent contempt. Wharton smiled at this littleness in so great a man, but determined that he should feel the power he despised.

With the active English Duke, it was only to will and to do. Distances were to him as nothing; and difficulties only stimulated him to give his adversaries a more signal overthrow. What Swift said of Lord Peterborough, was as aptly

adapted to Wharton; for while his rivals in the various courts of Europe were hearing of him at Rome, Paris, and London, and marvelling whether he would not next be in South America or Prestor-John's dominions: —

> "Still as they talk of his condition,
> So wonderful his expedition,
> He's with them like an apparition!"

As soon as he recovered from the immediate effects of his wound, he set forward on his new pursuit; and he did not move to and fro upon the earth on a vain errand. Before his rencontre with Ripperda at the Cardinal's, he had penetrated all the secrets of the Altheim apartments. The jealousy of Count Routemberg, respecting some of the objects of the Spanish policy; and the private dispositions of the Emperor on the same subject, he had also mastered, by having secured the key of Routemberg's bosom, the beautiful and avaricious Countess d'Ettrees. The secret wishes of half the nobility in

Spain, were also unfolded to him by the envy of de Patinos; and the venality of Orendayn was at his service.

Wharton was fully aware of the disgust that Maria Theresa had taken to Don Carlos; likewise of her romantic prepossession for the person and manners of Louis, and of the Empress's design to hasten the betrothment on this account. The Duke saw his vantage ground; and Ripperda's last conduct determined him to storm the breach he had made in these secret counsels.

It was easy to gain the ear of Routemberg, through the woman he worshipped. Through her insinuations, and the graver representations of His Excellency's confessor, (who knew the value of Wharton's gold,) the minister was made to suspect much dangerous matter in Ripperda's complicated influence at Vienna. Claudine d'Ettrees accused him of more sway with the Empress, than was consistent with her high station; that his designs

in marrying a prince of Spain, to the heiress of the empire, were very apparent; while a secret connection he had with the leader of the Bavarian faction, was totally inexplicable. To circumvent his prime movement, the confessor gave hints of the wisdom of uniting the Arch-duchess to a prince, whose interests must be wholly German; and Francis of Lorraine, a ward of the Emperor, and who was just returning from his travels in Italy, was suggested as the properest person. Routemberg detested Ripperda; and gave such efficient credence to every representation, that he beset the Emperor night and day, till he brought him to accord with all his new views.

Proof was given to him, of Elizabeth having admitted Ripperda to private political discussions in the Altheim apartments. Also, that her daughter was desperately attached to Louis; and that the worst consequences might be anticipated from the ambition of the father,

and the power of the son, when the innocent Princess should be entirely in their hands; as must be the case, should she marry the man she abhorred, and be continually in the society of the man she preferred, and who had an interest in preserving the preference.

Wharton had recently seen the Prince of Lorraine at Venice. And the circumstance which inspired the idea of his supplanting the Spanish match, was a general resemblance in his person, countenance, and mannner, to him who now filled the heart of the youthful Princess. The Duke found no difficulty in awakening the wishes, which were necessary to his scheme, in the mind of young Lorraine. His ambition was easily aroused, to aspire to the heiress of an empire; and his imagination was not displeased with the picture Wharton drew of his proposed bride.

"In your progress," rejoined the Duke, "you may consult me, as the ancient

heroes did their gods; but I must be equally invisible."

Every impression was made on the Emperor's mind, that Wharton desired. And to carry forward his measures against the Spanish minister, and his Empress, without a chance of impediment, Charles kept all that had been discovered to him, locked in his own breast.

Elizabeth, meanwhile, was filled with alarms respecting her daughter's unhappy infatuation. Her former placid temper had changed to irritability; and her conduct at times became so strange and desponding, the anxious mother was in hourly fear of her doing something rash with regard to Louis. Since the departure of Otteline, by unlucky accident, she had met him twice alone in the Altheim boudoir; and her repugnance to the Prince of Spain seemed so to encrease, the Empress saw no resource, but to hasten the day of affiance.

The Emperor was no sooner informed

of her intentions; than he made a feint of sparing his daughter's feelings during the preparations; and took her with him to pass the intermediate time at the summer palace.

Elizabeth had always intended that the marriage of her favourite should be solemnized the morning of the day in which the young bridegroom was appointed to represent Don Carlos at the Imperial altar. Louis had always understood this; and she feared to give his dislike of Otteline such advantage, as to yield him opportunity to retract his engagement, should she reserve no great political object to hold him in check. In this dilemma, she determined to throw herself upon his honour; and from her knowledge of his romantic generosity, she thought she could easily bring him to pledge it; and then she believed Otteline secure.

She told him she was anxious to comply with a private letter from the Queen

of Spain, to hasten the union between her son and the princess; and she would do so, provided he would promise to perform his engagement with Otteline as soon as she should arrive. Isabella had already implied her consent, though its formalities were yet to be declared. On the strength of this, and his father's granted approbation, Elizabeth demanded of him to say that he would marry Otteline, on any day she would name; and on such a pledge, the Empress would rest on his good faith, and the betrothment should proceed. All hope of escaping this hated union had long been over with Louis; and on Elizabeth representing that some strange clouds had lately hung over her husband's brow, which might burst, she knew not where, to the subversion of all the Spanish plans, the young patriot was the more readily persuaded to give the word of honour she required.

"But," added Louis, with a smothered

sigh;" in the august ceremony of next week, I conjure Your Majesty not to command me to be proxy!"

The Empress turned round.

"De Montemar! That is a bold petition. By what presumption, dare you offer it to the mother of the Arch-duchess Maria Theresa?"

"Her Highness is young, and fearful of the engagements to which that rite will bind her; and, as, in spite of myself, my heart will dare to compassionate even a Princess, in a moment of such aweful responsibility, I dread my weakness might dishonour the solemnity."

"And you have no weakness, but compassion for your future Princess?" asked Elizabeth, turning her Pallas-like eyes, full upon him.

Louis felt their appeal; and while a blush of mingled sensibility and modesty, coloured his manly cheek, he laid his hand on his breast and answered, "None; on the life I would dedicate to her ser-

vice, and to that of her illustrious mother!"

The Empress turned from him, and walked up the room. Her own discretion seconded his plea; and when she approached him again, it was with a gracious countenance, and to say that his petition should be considered with indulgence.

But when the Emperor returned with his daughter from the Luxemburg, a competitor, more formidable than the image of de Montemar had taken its station in the breast of the young Princess. The Prince of Lorraine had been introduced to her rescue, in a contrived moment of danger on the lake; and, in the confusion of fear, believing her preserver to be Louis, she had thrown herself in speechless gratitude upon his bosom. Her father, approaching, explained to her, that he who had saved her from a watery grave, was Francis of Lorraine; and every day afterwards, during her residence at the Lux-

emburg, she gladly admitted him to her presence. The young Prince was of the same age with Louis; and possessed so much of his grace of mind, as well as person, that he had no difficulty (by tender and unobtrusive attentions,) in transforming her fanciful attachment to De Montemar, into a grateful passion for himself.

The understanding of Maria Theresa was beyond her years; but it was tinctured by the systems of expediency amongst which she had imbibed her education. She was therefore prepared to sustain her part in the drama Routemberg was bringing on the *tapis*. Her father, apparently moved by her abhorrence of the Spanish Prince, and her predilection for the German one, sanctioned their mutual vows; but engaged her to keep the whole affair secret from her mother, until he could find a safe opportunity of breaking with the Spaniard. He exhorted her to persist in refusing her presence on the

proposed day of betrothment; he would secretly support her resistance; and throw obstacles in the way of the Empress's measures, until all should be obtained from Spain, and they might finally throw off the mask.

The resolute opposition which Elizabeth now met with from her, who had, hitherto, appeared like a drooping lilly, yielding unresistingly to the heavy shower that bowed her to the earth, amazed and perplexed her. As Charles had been careful to conceal his daughter's interviews with the Prince of Lorraine, and Francis did not come to Vienna; the Empress could trace no cause for this extraordinary change: and when she talked to her husband, of Maria Theresa's stubborn refractoriness, he coldly replied—

"The Marquis de Montemar has been admitted too familiarly to her presence. He is, as seeming fair, as his father: he may be equally false."

Surprised at this unexpected, and, she was sure, unprovoked aspersion on the Duke, the Empress cautiously took up the defence of his unswerving truth.

"He is unworthy your confidence;" replied the Emperor, "for, after all his affected hostility to Wharton, as the instigator of every vexatious act from the Bavarian conspiracy, I have discovered from unquestionable evidence, that he has secret intelligence with him. On what subjects, ambition, boundless and wild as his own, can alone guess. Look to his son, Elizabeth, and to our daughter."

Charles would not explain farther, and left the Empress in encreased perplexity.

In vain she interrogated her daughter; in vain she insisted on her union with Don Carlos: she was resolute in not answering a word to any of the charges her mother put to her, as the reason for her refusal. When the Empress was angry, Maria Theresa remained sullenly firm; when her mother was tender and

imploring, the hapless Princess wept in silence, but would not yield.

One morning Elizabeth entered her daughter's apartment, with a determination not to leave it, until she had brought her to the point, whence, she was resolved there should be no escape. She spoke, persuaded, threatened, implored; but the Princess was more obstinate than ever; though, so agitated by her mother's language, that she fell back in hysterical emotion into her chair. The violence of her disorder discomposed her dress, and the vest of her robe bursting open, the eye of her mother caught the glitter of something like the setting of a picture. With an immediate impulse she snatched it from the bosom of her daughter; and beheld, what she believed, the portrait of de Montemar.

Her eyes, for a moment, fixed themselves with a horrid conviction of a wide and nameless treachery. She looked from the picture to her daughter, with a

frightful glare, in their before mild aspect. Maria Theresa, alarmed out of her hysterics, had sprung from her seat, and stood before her mother, with her hands clasped, in speechless supplication.

"And when did he give you this?" demanded Elizabeth, in a hollow, and almost suffocated voice.

The Princess dropped, trembling on her knees, without power of utterance; for, not aware of her mother's mistake, she thought the discovery of the Prince's picture in her breast, had betrayed the secret of her father: and, on its preservation, he had taught her to believe, entirely depended her future happiness.

"Theresa, I command you, to confess to me, the whole of de Montemar's treachery. When did he dare to give you this?—and—unhappy, degenerate girl! how did you dare to give the encouragement, to warrant such treasonable presumption?"

Every word that now fell from the agi-

tated Empress was balm to the affrighted nerves of her daughter. Her father's secret was then safe; and, still retaining her humble position, she said in faultering accents; "Spare, de Montemar, my gracious mother! As I hope to see heaven, he is guiltless of all my offences against you. But ask me no more — I dare not answer it."

"He has bound you by a vow! or, you, wretched dupe, have disgraced your sex ——"

The mother's lips could not finish the charge she was about to put upon her innocent child. She paused, and threw herself into a chair; for her own heart recollected its youthful and chaste admiration of the father of this very de Montemar, and she burst into tears. The picture fell to the floor. Theresa looked where it lay, but forbore to touch it. Her heart was softened at her mother's silent tears; and her own trickling down her cheeks, she ventured to take the Em-

press's hand, and put it to her lips. Elizabeth pressed the filial hand that trembled in her's; and then Theresa faintly articulated, —

"Oh, my mother! release me from this horrid betrothment, and you shall know every thought and deed of this agonized heart!"

The Empress dried the tears from her eyes, and turning gently on her child, —"I pity you, Theresa," said she, "but I can do no more. You are born a princess; and your inevitable fate is to marry, not where your inclinations may prompt, but where the interests of your country dictate. Your birth-right gives you a sceptre, ordains you to be the dispenser of good or evil, to millions of dependent subjects; and you have nothing to do with love, with private, selfish joys. We, that are born to such destinies, must forswear the one, or resign the other."

"Then let the Electress of Bavaria take the reversion of the German em-

pire!" exclaimed the Princess, ardently, "let me resign all state and power, and only make me the happy wife of ——"

She checked herself, and buried her head in her mother's lap.

"Of him you must never see again!" returned the Empress, rising from her seat, and kissing the burning forehead of her daughter as she replaced her in her chair.

"I pardon your youth and innocence; and yet, was it innocence to forget the claims of Otteline upon his heart? Oh, my child, how deep must have been his wiles! That unblushing face of falsehood; that affected champion of honour! Never, never, will I forgive him. Theresa, you have seen de Montemar for the last time, till you are the wife of his prince."

As she spoke, she moved back, and found something under her foot. She stepped aside. It was the portrait which she had crushed, crystal and ivory, into

one shattered mass. The half-smothered cry of Theresa at the sight of the destruction, and the tears which gushed from her eyes, as, she involuntarily sprung forward to save the obliterated relics, confounded and penetrated her mother. While she hung, weeping, over them, the Empress drew a troubled sigh, and quitted the apartment.

In passing to her own chamber she met the Emperor, and, in the agitation of her maternal fears, told him all that had passed. Her heated prepossession changed the tacit acquiescence of her daughter, in the portrait having been that of Louis, into a positive confession that it was so. Charles was rather surprised at so direct a falsehood from his daughter; but as it was to maintain his secret, he rather wondered at her presence of mind, than blamed its obliquity.

The Empress talked herself into every suspicion of Louis's arts towards the Princesss, and insulting coldness to his

own affianced bride. While the Emperor stimulated her wrath, he tried to spread it from the son to the father, by new insinuations against the sincerity of both. He dwelt upon certain documents he possessed, that the quarrel at the Cardinal's, was concerted between Ripperda and Wharton, to blind the French minister, who had suspected their private friendship. He also mentioned the stolen glances which the Electress of Bavaria was often observed to give to de Montemar; and that he generally replied to them in the same clandestine way. It had been noticed in the *Prato;* and particularly at the assemblies of the Countess Lichtenstein, where, one night, the Electress evidently dropped her fan before him, that he might take it up; and, as he presented it, she closed her hand over his as she received it, — "and gave it a quick pressure, and a glance," continued the Emperor, "that pretty plainly declared they were no strangers."

The Empress listened to all with greedy, because prejudiced attention. But nothing of the information affected her with regard to Ripperda; a partial spirit presided in her mind, when he was accused; and she would believe nothing of such aimless treachery. Of Louis she now entertained the very worst opinion; and she determined to send for him immediately, and tax him at once with all that she had heard, against both his father and himself.

Charles remarked, that he knew from one or two of his young chamberlains, that Louis's profligacy was equal to his talents; that he was a constant frequenter of the most dissipated circles in Vienna; and therefore, he intimated the impropriety of committing the reputation of the Arch-duchess, by even implying to so vain and unprincipled a young man, the least hint of her preference for him; or allowing the possibility of his daring to turn an eye of passion upon her.

Elizabeth saw the delicacy of this caution; and while she consented to restrict her reproaches to political subjects alone, she determined to revenge herself on his presumption and duplicity, by precipitating the marriage she knew he abhorred.

CHAP. VII.

While this was passing at the palace, dispatches arrived from Madrid. On breaking the seals of the packet of the latest date, Louis perceived that the Queen supposed the Arch-duchess was now the betrothed of her son, for it contained congratulory letters on the event. But, there was also another which might not be quite so pleasing to Elizabeth, although Louis felt it came too late for him. He received copies, of what were inclosed for the Imperial pair; and this one was from Isabella to the Empress, retracting any consent she might have implied, to the Marquis de Montemar's marriage with Countess Altheim. It was written with apologies, and regrets for the necessity, but it was positive.

Ripperda accompanied this unexpected refusal, with a laboured epistle to his imperial friend. He excused the Queen's changed sentiments, by pleading a great point which she hoped to gain, by uniting his son in a different direction. With sincerity, he expressed his own distress, at being obliged to yield his wishes in favour of the Empress's beautiful *protegée*, to the duty he owed his sovereign; but, he concluded, with repeating, that in all essential circumstances, Elizabeth should find she had put no vain trust in Ripperda.

After all the polite cunning of Isabella's letter, and the hard-wrung finesse of her minister's, it was easy to discern that truth was conveyed in neither.

The fact was simply this:—De Patinos's correspondence with his friends at Madrid, and the whisperings of Orendayn, when he arrived there, had gradually made their way to the Queen, with insinuations and representations of the Em-

press's personal power over the Duke and his son. So much was said, that her jealousy was at last excited, to check it from proceeding further; and to try how far it could cope with her own influence in the same quarter, she told Ripperda her intentions that Louis should break with the Countess Altheim, and marry one she should hereafter name. Not suspecting her motive, he represented the hazard of putting so great an affront on the favourite of the Empress. Isabella was a passionate woman; and, when self-will urged her, she often acted as pertinaciously against her judgment, as against her counsellors. On this subject, she would hear no reasoning; no representation of the vexatious resentments that might be anticipated from Elizabeth. The more he dwelt on the Empress's mortification, the more she was resolved to excite it. She felt something of female vanity, as well as sovereign pride, in this opportunity of shew-

ing her rival Elizabeth, that she could make Ripperda sacrifice his early friend's wishes to his new mistress's commands.

Isabella was peremptory, and the dispatch was sent off; and with additional triumph too, for letters had arrived from Vienna to some of the attendants at court, mentioning the departure of a messenger to Madrid with accounts of the royal betrothment. In vain Ripperda protested against acting on such vague information; or indeed, on any information that did not come in the regular official train. Isabella laughed at his fears, and derided the idea that a rupture between his son and the favourite of the Empress, could have any effect on the marriage of her son, with the heiress of the Empire.

The messenger set off, and the issue soon followed.

While Louis was reading these dispatches, he received a summons from Elizabeth, to attend her immediately.

He took the packet that was for Her Majesty, and proceeded to the Altheim apartments. The Empress was there, but she hardly noticed him when he entered the room. She had caught a glimpse of his face as he approached; and the sight of its seeming nobleness incensed her the more against his actual dishonour.

She gave no credence to the story that had been told her of his father's insincerity. She knew the slanderous inventions of envy, and she confided, without a shadow of doubting, in the friend she had trusted from her youth. But for the delinquency of his son, she had ocular demonstration; and her indignation was hardly to be repressed.

Louis presented the Queen's and his father's letters. Elizabeth commanded him to read them. He obeyed without remark, though with an unsteady voice, as he uttered communications he knew were so hostile to her expectation. She

listened in speechless amazement, first to the one and then to the other. When he had finished, she took them from his hand, and turning them round in agitated silence, examined their seals and writing.

"It is his hand!" cried she, in a tone, from which the convictions in her bosom had rifled all its sweetness. Then turning to Louis, with all her lately suppressed wrath, flashing from her eyes, "It is meet that a false tongue should have read such false language! Louis de Montemar you are a traitor to me and mine, and your father is the same. He abets his treacherous son, to the ruin of a name, of fifty years' unblemished honour!"

Louis was not less astonished at this charge, than the Empress had been at the communication which aroused it. But attributing her displeasure, to a suspicion that he had wrought on his father to influence the Queen to prevent his mar-

riage, after the momentary shock of his first surprise, he calmly and respectfully answered her; — "that he was as faithful to all his bonds, made under the sanction of Her Majesty, as he believed, were the dictates of his father's heart. He regarded his promises to her, and his engagements to the Countess Altheim, as now too sacred to be broken by him, even at the command of his sovereign."

"Indeed?" Answered Elizabeth, hardly attempting to conceal her scornful doubt of his sincerity.

Her manner amazed him; it was so unlike the aspect of fair interpretation, with which she usually discussed a dubious subject.

"And you will marry the Countess Altheim?" continued she.

"Assuredly, Madam."

"And knowing my affection for her, you will generously leave her with me? You will follow the suite of my daughter to Spain, and you will become the bosom

Counsellor of the wife of your Prince? I apprehend your honour and your loyalty?"

She paused, and fixed her eyes on the calm astonishment of his. There was a haughty condemnation in her looks, he could not misunderstand; but still he was at a loss to account for the origin of so unmerited a judgment; and with the confident appeal of an unburthened conscience, he entreated to be told how he had incurred the displeasure he read in her words and manner.

She too well remembered the Emperor's caution to explain the offence, though the resentment of a suffering mother could not be entirely repressed. She cast down her indignant eyes, and with petrifying coldness replied:

"*Your* offence is of no moment. The shadow of an eclipse, which leaves no stain on the fair disk it would have darkened! But your father! He cannot start from his sphere, without troubling

nations, and quenching his own rays, which should have shone to eternity!"

While the Empress spoke of Ripperda, it was rather to utter the lamentations of her heart, over the dereliction of the coadjutor in whom she gloried; than addressing his son, who, she now thought, too worthless for remonstrance. She sat for a few minutes, looking abstractedly down, grasping the letter she had received. He did not interrupt her reverie. Conscious of no blame in himself; and equally convinced of his father's uprightness; with patient respect, he awaited her further explanation. At last she looked towards him, with an austere, but calm countenance. She opened her charge against the Duke, by repeating what the Emperor had told her of the pretended exchange of insults between Wharton and Ripperda at the table of Giovenozzo. She avowed that she had repelled the story as a slander; but the letter she held in her hand, proved that Ripperda

could surrender her dearest wishes, to his own fancied interests. She warmed in resentment, as she dwelt on his base compliance with the caprice of Isabella.

"One failure in fidelity," continued she, "is a sufficient earnest. — I believe the rest."

As the Empress had proceeded in her allegation, Louis's countenance brightened at the unfounded tale; and, without reserve, he unfolded to her all his father's hostility to Wharton: all at least, that he knew; for he was yet ignorant that the contention at the Cardinal's had ended in bloodshed. He spoke of his own attachment to the English Duke; but, that by the commands of his father, he had passed him by as a stranger, and was admonished never to consider him as a friend. Having exacted such a sacrifice from his son; and politically opposed every measure of Wharton's during his life; was it credible, that he

would now stake the grand objects of his existence, by forming a clandestine union with a man, with whom he had no common interest, and whose personal self he determinately hated?

"If my father ever had a sin in his son's eyes," continued Louis, "it was, and is the inveteracy of that hatred."

During this defence, the Empress frequently shook her head; and when it was finished, she rose from her chair.

"It will not do!" said she, "I see the brink on which I stood, and the consequences must come."

"Madam," replied Louis, "I conjure you, by the completion of your own object, in supporting my father in his labours for the peace of Europe; I conjure you, not to permit the accusations of real traitors, to turn your confidence from as true a benefactor of the human race, as ever devoted his life to man! Their tongues, when credited by your

ears, are of more mortal stroke, than all the daggers which struck at him under the garb of the Sieur Ignatius."

"And what is your tongue? Dissembling de Montemar!" cried she, "had you been true, those words, that voice, would have been evidence to out-weigh a multitude. But you are false;—and your father suffers by his advocate."

"In what am I false?" cried Louis, "not in affirming my father's integrity; for I am ready to seal my evidence with my blood!—Not in re-affirming my resolution to marry the Countess Altheim; for I am ready to pass through the ceremony, whenever Your Majesty commands!—But I should be false, indeed, were I to say, that I performed my hard-wrung word of honour, with my heart as well as my hand."

"Then you dare avow——?" demanded the Empress, turning rapidly towards him, and then checking herself.

"No more than what I once presumed

to tell Your Majesty, on the same knee, with which I now bend before this incomprehensible displeasure. I then said, and I now repeat, that, finding all her principles discordant to mine, it is her own exaction, and my honour alone, that compels me to make her my wife. Truth urges me to this last avowal; and self-defence, that her benefactres may judge if he can be false, who redeems his honour at the price of his happiness."

"Happiness! honour!" cried the Empress, and she laughed bitterly; "young hypocrite, I penetrate all thy artifice!—But if you can have a hope, that I shall pardon what *I know*, meet my Otteline at the altar on the very day she returns from Brunswick. Treat her with the duties of a husband, and the respect due to my friend; and once more the name of de Montemar may be heard by me without detestation."

With these words the Empress turned away, and left the chamber.

Louis returned home, appalled and distressed, by the scene which had just passed. He saw there were charges against himself in her bosom, which she did not chuse to deliver; to rest under them might be dangerous; and how could he confute what she disdained to utter?

CHAP. VIII.

In the midst of this confusion of mind, he arrived at the *Palais d'Espagne*, and was immediately involved in a host of perplexing discussions. Ministers and messengers awaited him in various apartments. As supereminent talent, united with virtue and power, has a force almost omnipotent; the powers of Europe, who aimed at aggrandisement by dishonest policies and aggression, dreaded the master-hand of the new minister of Spain.

This was a fact, enforced on Louis, in each succeeding audience; but while the remonstrances, and even threats of the representatives of these princes, assailed him in their different hours of conference; other applicants, in the shape of consuls and agents passing to various countries,

spoke of the Spanish trade, which now embraced the habitable globe; and added to the account, that while the sun of Ripperda's glory thus spread its rays over the whole earth; warming, cheering, and fructifying to the distant poles; he turned his careful eye, with all a parent's interest, to the internal policy of Spain.

By his exhortations and his example, he persuaded the grandees to come down from their sterile heights of indolent enjoyment; to disperse their riches by the patronage of genius; and to excite the people to industry by generously rewarding its labours. As for the people themselves, they whom the unworked-for golden tides from America had gradually sunk into stupid pride, and at last left to squallid poverty, he aroused them from their lethargy and laziness, by appearing to take pleasure in their interests; by visting them in their towns and villages; and stimulating them to bring prosperity to them all, by the active

labours of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce.

For nearly two centuries the Spanish people had been a nation of drones; they were now become a common-wealth of bees, and the hive filled with honey. The origin of the change was honoured as a god; and while,

"He raised his voice, and stretched his sceptred hand,"

perhaps he sometimes forgot that he yet was mortal.

But there is a pinnacle of human success and of human opinion, on which human foot was never yet permitted to rest. He who has attained it grows giddy, and the fiercest winds are summoned to blow him from his eminence. Man's enthusiasm in praise of a fellow mortal, is soon damped by the original sin of his nature — rebellious pride! and where he cannot find a mote in the eye he once thought omniscient, he will fancy a beam; and proclaiming the discovery,

the supposed blind guide is at once thrust into utter darkness.

Such spirits were now at work against Ripperda, both in Spain, and in the rival countries; and their labour in undermining, and laying trains, was equal to the great object of their overthrow. Routemberg in the German Court, and de Castallor, (the father of de Patinos,) in the Spanish, permitted neither sun nor stars to set upon a pause in their deep and dangerous machinations. Their agents were indefatigable and subtle; and as they were various, and apparently insignificant, the work moved onward as surely as invisibly, to the object of its aim.

The Empress was now assailed, daily and hourly, with information, which none would have dared to hint, had she not betrayed to her husband, some signs of doubting the perfect sincerity of Ripperda. A thousand things were brought forward to prove his entire devotion to

his new country; the devotion indeed, of ambition; for it was made apparent to her, that he was now its actual sovereign. Philip was a puppet in his hand; and the queen, who had exalted Ripperda to such despotic power, was to be propitiated, by every sacrifice to her caprice. One of her humours was to unite the son of her minister, with a niece of the widowed Queen of Saint Germain's. It was represented to Elizabeth, that Ripperda had sanctioned the pragmatic deed, not so much to gratify her, as to flatter the ambition of Don Carlos, in making him the husband of the future Empress; and that his reconciliation to Duke Wharton, who was alike the emissary of the Stuart, and of the Bavarian factions, might now be accounted for: though the termination of such complicated and opposing views were certainly beyond calculation. These, and other innuendoes, and references to the remaining articles, public and private, of the

late treaty, were amply descanted on; and the misled and irritated Elizabeth, (the more irritated, on account of her personal regard for Ripperda,) was wrought to so high a pitch of indignation, that she did not deign to answer either his, or the queen's letters on the premature congratulation and withdrawn consent.

She resolved to harass them on one object, and to disappoint them in the other; and while she countermanded the preparations for the betrothment of her daughter, she hurried every arrangement for the marriage of her favourite. From the hour of her last interview with Louis, she never admitted him to her presence; but she wrote to Otteline to hasten her return to Vienna, although she knew her venerable father lay at that time at the point of death.

Elizabeth now took as much pains to proclaim the intended union of Countess Altheim, with the son of the Duke

de Ripperda, as she had before been cautious to conceal it. The astonishment it excited, broke out in wonder from some, and lamentations from others. It was the conversation of every circle; and discussed according to the dispositions, or views of the speakers. Princess de Waradin wept over her disappointed wishes for her daughter; and Countess Lichtenstein railed at the mortification of hers. The women, in general, were incensed at such a triumph, for a woman they despised; and the men smiled on each other, at the young minister's folly. Count Sinzendorff alone felt no surprise; for he had seen Louis's entanglement, from the moment he knew of his renewed visits at the Altheim apartments. He, therefore, did as he said; made no further observation, but conducted himself to his young friend with grave distance. Louis, understood it; and durst not, then, offer an apology, by revealing the truth. Now, the Empress had declared it; and

Louis felt, that all knew his shame, in having pledged himself to the most venal, most contemned woman, in the German Empire!

Letters arrived from Otteline, which told her patroness that her invalid was no more; and that a certain day should see her at the feet of her mistress. Elizabeth suppressed the death of the old man, resolved that nothing should delay the ceremony which should make Louis her favourite's vassal for life; and the only time she condescended to notice him before the arrival of his bride, was to name the day, and command him to prepare for his nuptials. He bowed in silence, and she passed on.

He had written a distinct account to his father, of the Empress's charges against him, and of her inexplicable conduct to himself; he had also enforced the necessity of fulfilling their mutual engagements to Countess Otteline; and affirmed his own intention of immediately

obeying the commands of Elizabeth to that effect. Having dispatched this letter, he prepared to go through the unavoidable sacrifice with propriety and composure of heart; and he determined to act by her with forbearance and kindness, though he felt that it was to a living death he was consigning that heart; he was preparing himself, as one wedding the cold tenant of the grave.

From meditations such as these, he walked abroad into the open air of a retired glade, diverging from the gardens of the *Palais d'Espagne*, towards the Danube. The evening gale was fresh and cheering, but still the load was on his soul; no breeze could waft it hence, no sigh could shake it from its deep adhesive lodgement.

" I contemned love !" said he, to himself; " I despised the tranquil and blissful joys of heart meeting heart, in the tender and pure relation of wedded affections. I must aspire to the agitating

transports of self-devotion, in scenes of sacrifice and peril! I must be all for glory, or be nothing! And now, I bleed in soul, for glory, and the result of this proud, unnatural heart, will be nothing! O, no; the worm is there that never dies! The consciousness of having taken to my bosom, a creature I despise; a woman, whom the world derides; and who paralizes every feeling within me, of father, husband, friend. Yes, ennobling love, honourable marriage," cried he, "you are revenged!"

He went on, ruminating on the vain shadow, into which his over-heated ambition to act and to be distinguished, had involved him. He had been bewildered in its intricacies, —but not intimidated by its thunderings and its lightnings; he had pressed forward in the visionary atmosphere, till the gulph met him; and, alas, in what early youth did it betray him to this deep destruction!

He was returning homewards through

an umbrageous aisle of chesnuts, which led by the backs of the superb gardens, when he saw Duke Wharton turn suddenly into the same avenue. There was not a creature in it but themselves. Wharton and he were approaching each other; but the Duke was walking musing forward, without raising his eyes, as in the abstraction of thought, he was dashing away the pebbles in his path, with the point of his sword.

The instant Louis beheld him, Elizabeth's accusations against his father rushed to his mind; but their confutation came in the same moment. He remembered how his father had execrated this noble enemy, even at the time he declared his worth. He remembered his father had acknowledged to him that the wine he drank at the Cardinal's had affected him as wine never did before, and maddened his blood. In this mood, he pressed insult upon Wharton, and Wharton revenged himself, by screening his adver-

sary from blame, and apologizing as the offender! Ripperda, having brought himself to relieve his proud sense of obligation, by this avowal to his son, had commanded his silence on the subject for ever; but the remembrance was anchored in his heart.

At sight of this generous enemy, this faithful friend, how could he restrain the grateful impulse to fling himself into his arms! Wharton was alone; no one was near to report the momentary recognition!

"Duke Wharton!" cried he.

Wharton looked up, and, for an instant, around; his face lightened with the flash of joyful surprise, and opening his arms, Louis did indeed throw himself into them.

"Oh, this hug!" cried the Duke, as he strained him to his bounding heart; "it is the resurrection of confidence in man. You are true, and it matters not who is false."

"True! for ever true!" cried Louis, grasping the hand of his friend with unutterable feelings. In proportion to his conviction, that love would henceforth be denied him, his sensibilities pointed all to friendship; and poured into that sacred flame the collected blaze.

"I needed these honest throbs to tell me so!" replied Wharton, "but the world has *reported and slandered* Louis de Montemar, as I once prophesied."

"Oh, Wharton, how much is on my soul, that you have so generously endured for me and mine! Again and again, I have turned from you, when that soul followed you. I fled from you in the palace; but you know that my residence at Vienna was then to be concealed. I treated your clinging friendship with harshness, and yet you pardoned me; you risqued your safety, to preserve myself and the Sieur Ignatius from danger. And when wine had unselfed my noble father, you received his passionate insults

with forbearance and forgiveness! Wharton, had I a thousand hearts, they should be yours, for this unconquered friendship."

"And had I as many, dear de Montemar, to transfer into your breast, they would be insufficient to repay the life you saved to me, in that of Maria of Bavaria."

The Duke then hastily recapitulated the Electress's account of the transaction, and her increased gratitude for his having maintained it so profound a secret. Louis listened with pleasure, and dwelt with delight on the interesting Princess and her son. Wharton smiled at his animation: and, with all his former sparkling archness, softly repeated,—

"Dum tu, Lydia, Telephi
Cervicem roseam, & cerea Telephi
Laudas Brachia, væ meum
Fervens difficili bile tumet jecur."

Louis smiled also; but it was accompanied by a mantling cheek. The praises of women might now have passed unno-

ticed, from their familiarity; and, in general, it would have been so, but he respected the Electress, and admiration from her recalled the blush of modest consciousness. The Duke intimated a possibility of contriving a meeting between her, Louis, and himself, at her villa on Mount Calenberg.

"I have much to say to you, de Montemar," added he, "much of importance. That rare voice of thine has conjured a devil out of Philip Wharton; and now you must have the arcana of his heart."

Louis looked on him, and grasped his hand; "and could you, indeed, doubt me?"

"I will tell you more anon," replied Wharton; "come to-morrow night, at ten o'clock, to Mount Calenberg. There will be no danger in such a place, but much mystery, and, added he, with gaiety, —

"As veiled charms are fairest,
So stolen joys are dearest."

Before Louis could answer in the negative, he heard voices in the adjoining garden. The friends were standing close to the wall; but on these sounds they moved away; and a key presently turned in the door.

"You come?" cried Wharton, as his hand gave the pressure of farewell.

"Impossible," returned Louis.

Wharton stood for a moment.

"You must," cried he, "since she will dare it! But there can be no discovery."

"I dare not, for my life and honour."

"For your father's life and honour, you must dare every thing! *Osez* is my badge, and you will be wise to make it yours."

Wharton uttered this with a peculiar force of voice, and aweful expression in his countenance. Louis was thunderstruck: and yet, how could his father be involved in Wharton's demand? He was in Spain, and no longer in danger from his former enemies!

"My father's honour forbids my compliance," replied he; "I dare not go to the Electress's villa; I dare not meet, even you, by design."

The garden door at that moment opened, and a bevy of persons issued from it. Wharton dropped the hand of his friend. "Faithless, deluded de Montemar!" cried he; and breaking away, the friends mutually disappeared.

CHAP. IX.

The influence of Ripperda over the minds of the King and Queen of Spain had reached its acmé. Isabella's enthusiasm for the new minister was more like passion than patronage; and Philip's deference to him possessed all the fanatic zeal of the devotee who worships the object he has beatified. The King believed he had converted Ripperda to the Catholic faith, and he exulted in the reclaimed heretic as a future saint.

The minister's eye kept steady to one point; to raise the country he governed, to the utmost pinnacle of earthly grandeur. But his manner of conducting his projects, and demeaning himself after their accomplishment, had suffered a rapid and extraordinary change since he

returned from Vienna. During his voyage from Genoa to Barcelona he was attacked by a delirious fever, in consequence of the wound he had received in his rencontre with the banditti of the Appenines. It seemed to have jarred his nerves and affected his temper; or rather to have taken off the curb which his self-control had hitherto kept on the motions of his passions; but this alteration did not appear at first. His habits of universal suavity prevailed for a time, until he launched so deeply into business, as to forget all minor considerations in its great results. He became not merely zealous, but impetuous in the prosecution of his objects; not merely determined on a point, but dogmatical in its assertion. He did not now persuade the Lords of the Council, by his always subduing eloquence; but he commanded from the consciousness of mental superiority, and the conviction of his power to execute all his designs. The pride of

the Grandees was incensed, and the precipitation with which he urged forward all degrees of persons, rather offended than served them. There is a restiveness in human nature that resists compulsion, even to its own manifest advantage.

Ripperda saw no will but his own; he was sure of its great purpose, and, therefore, stopped not to solicit the good from others, he believed he could do more shortly himself. He went careering forward to his point, overturning and wounding; but as he speeded on, he left a train of enemies behind.

Even the King and Queen began to start from the patriotic despot they had raised. Enamoured of his vision of happiness for Spain, he snatched the prerogative too openly from their hands, and conceded privileges to the people, novel to the Spanish laws. He dared to oppose the extirpating power of the inquisition, by protecting certain Jewish

merchants from its fangs; and this being represented to Philip, as a proof of his being a heretic in his heart, the monarch considered it unanswerable, and determined to watch him narrowly. His most active enemy with the Queen was Donna Laura; her nurse and confidant, an old Italian, totally abandoned to avarice. Being irritated by his late disdain of propitiating her as formerly, by successive magnificent presents; she sold her interest in another quarter, and studied day and night to destroy him in the favour of her mistress. She knew where Isabella was particularly vulnerable; her vanity as a woman; and the crafty dame had many stories to recount of Ripperda's early devotion to Elizabeth. She insinuated, that it was rather to be near her than to negociate for Spain, that he so willingly consented to go to Vienna in disguise; and she easily corroborated her assertion, by turning Isabella's attention to his gradually chang-

ing manner since his return. But Isabella did not require to be reminded of the cessation of his homage. Ripperda had lately omitted all those gallant attentions, which spoke the lover, who may only dare to devote his heart and his life to the pure object of his wishes, while she moves above him in unsullied light, like Cynthia in her distant heavens.

Without adulation of this kind, Isabella could not exist; and it never came so sweet from any lips as those of Ripperda; it never beamed with so graceful a homage from other eyes. It was her delight to mingle politics and chivalric devotion, in their long conferences. It was her triumph, in the crowded court, to see his eyes fixed alone on her; and to behold herself envied by her ladies as a woman, as much as she was respected by them as their Queen. But when the change took place; and, regardless of these useful arts, he became absorbed in his duties; then, Laura taught

her to believe he thought only of Elizabeth.

His enemies in the cabinet were quick to perceive when their devices had taken effect on the King and Queen. Amongst the most formidable of these illustrious conspirators, was the hoary headed Marquis de Grimaldo, whose disgrace had preceded Ripperda's taking the supreme chair. The old Grandee held a strict watch over his successor's proceedings; and made it the business of his life to collect observations on his minutest actions, and to misrepresent, or aggravate them, to the ears of jealous Majesty. The Marquis de Castallor, who had lost the office of Secretary at War, when the new minister absorbed it in his ample grasp, joined with Grimaldo, heart and hand, to overthrow his Colossal power. To this end they spread a distorted epitome of his favourite views, amongst their retainers. These disseminated them to the people, with proper commentaries, in

dark hints and distant observations. Ripperda was talked of as the son of a rebel; one who had been born in a heretic country, and educated in its faith; who had embraced the true church, merely from ambition; who was depriving the Grandees of their privileges; and devising plans to reduce the gentlemen of Spain to the rank of bourgeois and slaves, by turning them to bodily labour and mechanic trades, and abridging them of their evening siesta and morning revels under the shade of their groves.

While the fortress was undermining at home, they were not idle, who were preparing to storm it from abroad. France, saw with apprehension, His Catholic Majesty drawing such strict bonds with the house of Austria. The States General were alarmed at the treaty of commerce. England proclaimed a rough indignation at the demand for Gibraltar, which Austria had made in behalf of Spain. And, it being reported amongst the nations,

that Ripperda's views were to compel by force, what he could not obtain by negociation, his overthrow was considered a common cause. The various silent armaments, which commenced on this resolution, were represented in appalling colours to Philip; and as the Court of Austria so slowly performed its part in the treaty, his apprehensions were more easily awakened. The insincerity and insult of this delay were doubled in effect by the private correspondence of De Patinos to his father, who spoke mysteriously of the determination of Charles's cabinet, from some hidden cause, not to perform any more of their engagements.

Louis, meanwhile, unconscious of the storm that was circling round his father's head in Spain, was stemming his way through the traversing movements of his enemies at the Austrian Court. He contended firmly for his political objects, but resigned himself with desperate despair, to the current which bore his private happiness to destruction.

He had obeyed an intimation from the Empress, that Countess Altheim was arrived, and prepared to name the day and hour for their nuptials; and he went to her apartments to receive the abhorred appointment from herself. She met him with all her smiles; for the memento of the lowlines of her origin, presented to her in the domestic scene she had just left, stimulated her joy at the prospect of being elevated out of these humbling impressions, by the pomp of an illustrious marriage. She had just quitted the bed of death, had just closed the eyes of a respectable parent; and yet had vanity so steeled her soul to every feeling of filial nature, that, banishing all, as a thing with which she had no concern, she turned alone to views of splendid rivalry: and, when Louis appeared, exultation in the full Court of the Empress swam before her eyes with his entering form.

With unaffected rapture, she met his ceremonious salute, and softly whispered,

as his cold cheek touched hers, that she knew the object of his visit. It was soon discussed. For Louis had hardly repeated in words, what his promise to Elizabeth extorted, before her ready favourite named the evening of the following day. He felt the paleness of his countenance spread to his heart; and, without pulsation in his veins, his lips parted in a vacant smile; and he suffered the glowing hand she had put into his, to remain unnoticed in his motionless grasp.

At this moment, the Empress entered; and Otteline prevented any involuntary exhibition of her resentment at the frozen demeanor of her lover, by rising hastily, and as hastily informing Her Majesty that she had obeyed her commands in naming her nuptials for the morrow. Elizabeth read the despair of his countenance, as he started from his seat at her approach; and, triumphing in her victory, she seemed in that hour

to forget all her inexplicable coldness, and to be as gracious as ever. She embraced Otteline; and gave him her hand to kiss, with repeated expressions of future confidence in the husband of her friend.

The marriage was to be solemnised with unexampled magnificence in the chapel of the palace; and the equipage which was to convey the favourite to her husband's residence, was to be the gift of her patroness. Louis summoned himself as well as he could, to perform that with cheerfulness, which it was right to do at all; and, he conducted himself, during the remainder of the interview, with respect to his future bride, and extorted gratitude to her mistress.

The remainder of the day was passed in his official duties; but when evening came, he could not endure his own thoughts; the anticipations of to-morrow sickened and distracted him; and he rushed out, to fly himself, and the image

of her who had blighted all his prospects.

He hurried to the *Hotel d'Ettréęs;* but the scenes of careless gaiety he saw there, seemed only to chafe his mind. The sight of young men of his own years; some, with similar pursuits, moving on with honour; and others, worthlessly wasting their time; but all, free and untortured by bonds like his; barbed him to the quick: and he was hurrying from the splendid mockery, when in the outward saloon, which was almost solitary, he was met by the Countess Claudine. She accosted him with wonder at his early flight. In his eagerness to escape, he made some senseless excuse. Laughing, she put her fair hand upon his arm, and told him a little more civility to her, and a little less impatience towards his intended bride, would, at that moment, be more becoming, in the representative of the most gallant nation in Europe!

Louis rallied himself to reply in her own way; and putting her arm through his, she drew him back into the rooms. In her brilliant discourse, so sparkling with wit, so exquisite in sentiment, she united all the varied powers of "*Bland Aspasia, and the Lesbian Maid*;" and Louis felt grateful for the lively interest with which she, evidently tried to amuse him, during the long protracted evening. But ere they parted, while she was walking with him down an illuminated and solitary avenue of orange-trees that led from the supper-room, she contrived to let him know that every body wondered at his having persuaded Countess Altheim to so indecorous a step, as to meet him at the nuptial altar before the ashes of her father had been consigned to the grave. Louis repelled this charge from himself; and declared his belief that Claudine had received wrong information respecting the death of Monsieur de Blaggay, as it had never been intimated to him. His fair com-

panion shook her head, and while she turned her full bright eyes upon his face, she calmly said:

"Were you convinced of this fact, would you marry the woman who could commit so unfeeling a sacrilege on the memory of her parent?"

Louis could make only one answer, and he did it with downcast eyes. "These are questions, Madam, to which I can give no reply. At this moment, I consider Countess Altheim as having every claim on me; and her character is under my protection."

"Generous, de Montemar!" replied Claudine, "How have you been entangled in this engagement! I see your heart, and I urge no more. But forgive me, that I lament such a destiny for such a man? Had all men your honour——"

She interrupted herself with a convulsive sigh, and wringing, rather than pressing the hand she had unconsciously snatched, she parted from him. Louis

disbelieved the story of Monsieur de Blaggay's death; but he was affected by the manner of his accomplished informer; and slowly withdrawing through the now almost deserted rooms, mused on the variety of human misery.

CHAP. X.

When that sun arose, which, he believed, was to set on him a completed wretch, he turned from its beams with a loathing sense of what his vain credulity and headlong passion had brought upon him; a joyless youth, an old age of desolation! How different from his home of Lindisfarne! But he could not bear the reflection, and with fevered impatience, he hurried through the business of the morning.

At three o'clock, just as he had shut himself into his study, to brood over his last hours of liberty; and to consecrate them to the unburthening of his full soul to his venerable uncle, in a letter, which, while he wrote, he thought it would be

cruelty to send; a billet was brought him from the Empress: it contained these lines:

"A circumstance, which shall be explained hereafter, delays your nuptials. Otteline is gone for a few days to the Luxemburg to join my daughter. To-morrow, at noon, be in the boudoir, and you will meet Elizabeth."

This was heaven's reprieve to Louis; suspension was life, and with almost hope of some unlooked-for escape, he repaired in the evening to the Chateau de Phaffenberg. His object in visiting that lonely habitation, was to consult papers that remained there, on a dispatch he was making up for Sweden.

While the gorgeous sun-set, by which he had extracted the memorandums, dissolved into a bloomy twilight; and the soft moon was rising in silvering glory over the hills, Louis felt the soothing aspect of nature; and gliding through the garden door, which stood half open,

he stood for a moment viewing the scene before him.

"How beautiful is nature!" exclaimed he, "how unobtruse her loveliness, how guileless all her charms!"

He gently descended the steps of the terrace. All was still. Not a zephyr ruffled the leaf of a rose, and a soft breathing fragrance bathed his reposing senses. He walked on, and thought of the rapt liberty of the soul in the sweet serenities of beautiful solitude. No rebellious feeling of any kind then agitated his placid bosom; every passion was at rest, — his ambition slept in its thorny bed, and his remembrances of Otteline were quenched in the gentle dews of a resigned spirit. Such power has the divine hand of Nature on the son that loves her! and thus did he glide along, with the ethereal temper of his soul beaming in every feature, like the reflected face of heaven.

In this blessed calm, his meditations

had ascended far above this sublunary world, when he observed a man spring off the battlements into the garden, from the very quarter where he had once clambered himself. A second glance, recognised the figure of Duke Wharton, who, immediately, hastened towards him. An exulting smile was on his countenance, as he hailed him in his approach.

"This is safer ground than the *Horti Adonidis*, I fixed for our conference!" cried he, "no envious demon would ever think of tracing Philip Wharton to so desolate a region as this!"

"I have found it a garden of peace," replied Louis, putting out his hand to Wharton with glad surprise; "and, were it not for fear of the consequence of this rash seeking me, I should call it the garden of happiness too!"

"De Montemar," cried his friend, "it does not become friendship like ours, to be always fearing consquences, and

skulking past each other, as if our meetings had guilty errands. How different are you in this detested court of finesse, from the free-hearted, independent De Montemar, who won my soul on his unbondaged native mountains! Louis, where is that open eye, that open heart? that fearless, brave, uncuirassed bosom? All that you can gain in Vienna or at Madrid, is not worth one of those proofs of manhood!"

Louis turned on him a countenance, in which all that Wharton had conjured up in that noble soul, shone bright in the moon-light.

"If I have fear, it is to do wrong; and that is no change of my nature. If I shroud my heart, it is from them who cannot understand it; if I shroud my eye, it is from them who are not worthy to read my thoughts; and for my shut bosom, Wharton, would it gratify you, to hear it was unlocked to fools? You have the key of it, my friend! A triangle

encases my heart," continued he, with one of his wonted smiles; "and you have one of its sides."

Wharton pressed his hand.

"Then Cæsar has quite forgiven Brutus?"

"What could I not forgive him?" replied Louis. All the trust of his partial and enthusiastic heart, spoke in those words; and he thought within himself, —"Oh, that I might give my whole life to filial love and friendship!" As the hopeless wish passed through his soul, the *iron entered* with it, but did not pass away.

They walked together to a recess in the garden, where they sat down under the full radiance of the unclouded moon.

"De Montemar," said Wharton, "this hour is portentous. Hear me to an end; and you will then have an ample reply to your question, of why I so named your

father, when you broke from me in the avenue."

Louis was ready to listen; and his friend unfolded to him a scene in the German court, which petrified him with astonishment, and made him indeed maintain a breathless silence during the recital. He displayed the insincere character of the Emperor, and explained his manœuvres in delaying the fulfilment of the great articles of the treaty, and only executing the small, while he managed to draw every resignation from the Spanish side. He imparted to Louis the secret arrangement between Charles and the Prince of Lorraine; (though he withheld his own share in the transaction) and shewed that the Arch-duchess was never intended, by her father, to be the wife of Don Carlos. He also declared that the Emperor derided the investiture he had sent to the Spanish Prince, with the remark, when he signed it, that "swords would cut through parchments."

But the worst information was to come. He knew that a plan was laid, to accomplish the political ruin of the Duke de Ripperda, and by that achievement at once obliterate every engagement that was made through him.

At this intimation Louis was all ear: For, during the varied disclosure, he could connect its details with circumstances which had embarrassed his diplomatic proceedings; and internal evidence stamped the veracity of every assertion of his friend.

Wharton then explained the Empress's change towards Ripperda; in the first instance, from her womanly jealousies respecting the Queen of Spain, and now rendered complete, by her giving belief to the calumnies of his rivals. She secretly abetted the Emperor's duplicity; and only waited the completion of Louis's marriage with her heartless favourite, to dare her former friend in the face of Europe.

Louis's brain was in a whirl. He could not doubt the proofs Wharton gave him of the facts; but in the midst of a son's bitter anathemas against the faithless Elizabeth and her deceitful husband, he yet found comfort in asserting the adherence of his own sovereigns, to their chosen minister.

"You cannot judge of his security there," replied Wharton, "till you know the machinery his enemies mean to move in that quarter."

And then he urged Louis to the necessity of obtaining this information; and taking the sort of glorious revenge on the whole of the proud conspirators, as would confound them, and excite the admiration of all honest men. The information lay in the power of one who could furnish him with the names of persons in Austria and Spain, who were sworn to compass the ruin of Ripperda. But could the conspiracy be declared, with its train of signatures, before it

took effect, the eyes of the public would be opened, and the Spanish Minister secured.

Louis declared his eagerness to seek such information at any hazard. "But how is it to be obtained?" cried he.

"A bribe!" answered Wharton.

"The means are base as our enemies!"

"When a besieged city suspects a mine, do not the inhabitants dig underground, and meet their enemy at his work?"

"Poniards to poniards!" returned Louis with a cheerless smile.

"Even so," answered Wharton, "shall I give your invisible friend *carte blanche?*"

"Grant him every thing in my name," replied Louis, "which can be done with honour. This conspiracy must be in my possession, before another sun sets over my head."

"Then in this spot to-morrow even-

ing, at the same hour," returned Wharton, "you shall see me again; and with a document, that may free you from another thraldom. I have my hand on many springs; and one has started a true image of your Otteline, sculptured by herself; she dare not forswear her work, and when it confronts her, if you will, you are free."

"Nothing can free me there," replied Louis.

"Why, you would not hug your chains?"

"No; but they will clasp me until death. I am bound to her by every tie of honour."

"Shew her, what I will bring you to-morrow night, and your honour will release you."

"There is but one thing, that could release me!" cried Louis, the ingenuous suffusion of virtue mantling his face; "Is it any charge, any proof, of her dishonour?"

Wharton laughed.

"If you mean by *dishonour*, a breach of truth, of honesty, of delicacy, of every principle respectable to man, and graceful in woman; you know, she is dishonoured below contempt. But if you restrict it, to the sense in which it is commonly applied to the angelic sex, I am not prepared to answer. She may be as chaste as unsunned snow, she is certainly as cold: but for warm, inspiring virtue! she knows it not, and she will wither it in every bosom to which she clings."

Louis's hand was now pressed on his aching forehead. The Duke continued.

"See, what she has done with the noble hearted Empress! And did you know the effects of her example on the innocent Maria Theresa; how that young creature conceals her love for the Prince of Lorraine, under the appearance of a passion for you—."

"Impossible!" interrupted Louis.

"It is the fact," replied Wharton, "and on this argument, Elizabeth accuses you of aspiring to her daughter, and urges your marriage with the favourite against every opposition."

A strange emotion shook the frame of Louis: he saw the net which the villainy of man and woman had coiled around his father and himself, and starting from his seat, he exclaimed:

"Wharton, my only friend! Bring me the double documents; and I will save my father and myself, or fall with him at once, into the interminable ruin!"

"To-morrow night, then," cried Wharton, "you shall be master of your fate."

Louis clasped the Duke in his arms; who, as he felt the full heart of this anxious son throbbing against his side, said in a cheering voice—"Courage, de Montemar! These conspiring fiends have not yet found Jove's thunderbolt.

Pay his ransom, and not a point of thy father's glory shall suffer by their shears."

"Nothing, under heaven, can rob him of the glory of his virtues," replied Louis; "but by your aid, my tried, my faithful Wharton, he shall not lose even an earthly ray. May the Providence which brought me such a friend, and fastened my soul to him; may it bless your exertions in this crisis of our fate!"

A burning crimson flushed over the cheek of Wharton, as Louis uttered this ardent appeal to friendship and to Heaven.

"Hero-fashion?" cried the Duke, "mingle prayer with warfare! But thy orison is for a graceless, — and half at least will be dispersed in empty air."

"I will stand the hazard!"

Again they embraced, and separated.

CHAP. XI.

HAD not Louis been forwarned by Wharton, and enabled to compare what he saw, with what he heard, the events of the succeeding day were calculated to lull him to security.

Elizabeth explained the delay of his marriage; and it was what the Countess d' Ettrees had intimated, the death of Monsieur de Blaggay having transpired. The Empress took upon herself the previous concealment of the event; alledging to Louis, that she had done it, to suffer no further impediment in the way of a ceremony so essential to the happiness of her friend. She then insinuated, to her almost silent auditor, what a proof she would regard it of his general devotion to her, if he would urge

Otteline, and petition the Emperor, to permit the celebration of the marriage on the eighth day after the funeral solemnity.

Louis ventured to say, that after so awful an event, the haste she recommended, would seem so irreverent in the eyes of the world, he could not persuade himself to commit such an outrage on propriety, unless he might at the same time present some adequate apology to society for his breach of its laws. While he spoke, it occurred to him, how he might shew his innocence with regard to Maria Theresa, without implicating even her happiness; (for he was well assured, that what he was going to demand, would not be granted;) and he added, that he would make his petition to the Emperor, provided Her Majesty would consent that the Arch-duchess should be affianced on the same day. Elizabeth started at this unexpected request; but, whatever

were its motive, she thought she could put it to silence for ever; and with a well-feigned graciousness, replied, "yes; if you will stand the proxy!"

"I am ready Madam,—for I have sufficiently experienced the folly of my presuming to decline it."

Baffled by this prompt assent; and astonished at the calmness with which he continued to enforce the remonstrances of Spain on this head, and on other delays of the Austrian cabinet,—she listened to him to the end; and then rising from her chair, fixed her eyes on him, and said.—

"Had I required any thing more to assure me of the nature of the man, who has so coolly and comprehensively argued all these points; I should find it in that coolness and those arguments on one of them. Marquis I will reply to these subjects hereafter."

During his interviews with the different ministers, this day, he could not but

wish to have had a window in their breasts, to read who amongst them were the enemies of his father. Observation on men, however, had given him knowledge sufficient, to guess that the most obsequious, the fullest in smiles and complacency, and the most elaborate in compliment to the supreme minister in Spain, were the persons whose names were most likely to be found in the confederation against him. The president of the council, the crafty and luxurious Routemberg, overpowered him with assurances of his premptory demands on the executive government for the fulfilment of every article in the treaty; and, but for the information of Wharton, he should have quitted the chamber in the fullest confidence of his father's entire influence in the Austrian cabinet. The same game of finesse was played at his own table; for there De Patinos had for some time assumed an air of civility. But Louis could not trust the Spaniard's lurking

and fierce eye; neither could he relish the sycophants, who followed the tone of their leader; yet he was polite to all: and a common observer would not have guessed that treachery was on the one side, and antipathy on the other. Louis had no suspicions mingled with his dislike; for he could not suppose that young men, domesticated at his table, and sanctioned by his father's patronage, could be cloaking a hidden arm to stab him to the heart.

Notwithstanding these numerous avocations, the hours seemed to move on leaden pinions till the sun set, and he descried the moon's fair cressent silvering the gilded doom of Saint Michael's church. Then was the moment of his appointment with, he believed, the only bosom which beat true to him, in that wide metropolis; the only tongue that spoke to him without guile; the only hand that would venture to shield his father from the professing friends, who, like those who slew

his great ancestor, the Prince of Orange; pressed on him with caresses, to destroy him more securely.

On the answer which Wharton was to bring him from the too well-informed oracle of all this evil, depended the success of the conspiracy, or its failure! In short, in a few minutes, he might have the safety of his father, and the preservation of Europe in his hand. He could not disconnect these two ideas in his mind; and when they were united with the magnanimous friendship of Wharton, hope in that union silenced every argument to fear.

The friend in whom he trusted did not make the heart sick by delay. He was mounting the parapet, at the moment Louis appeared on the terrace.

"Brother of my soul!" cried the latter, as their hands met; "to meet you thus, labouring for me and mine; proving the nobleness of that misjudged spirit!—I would endure again, all the

pain your information gave me last night, to purchase to my father and my uncle, conviction of this unexampled friendship!"

"Root the conviction in your own heart, de Montemar, and I care not who plucks at the branches."

Louis urged his friend to the history of his embassy; and Wharton told him, he had seen the written memorandum of the whole scheme against his father. He informed him, there were persons at the Austrian court that were to accuse Ripperda to the king of Spain, of a plan of self-aggrandizement as bold as it was dangerous. He was to be represented as playing a double game at Vienna and at Madrid; and that the interests of both nations were alternately to bend, according to the veering of his own personal views. He was to be charged with clandestine communications with France and Portugal; and of being the secret instigator of the late attempt to poison his royal master. His object in so nefa-

rious an act, was supposed to be the certainty he had of being dictator of the kingdom, while under the sceptre of a minor. In short, every wild, preposterous, and sanguinary instigation of ambition, was to be alleged against him. The charges were to be supported at Madrid, by a powerful majority of grandees; and should the scheme go on, there could be no doubt of the impeachment of Ripperda under a cloud of false witnesses; and most probably, the perpetration of some iniquitous sentence against his life. The signatures at the bottom of this memorandum, were hidden from Wharton's view, when he was allowed to read it.

"For," added he, "the possessor will reveal them to no eyes but your own. However, I read enough in the body of the document, to see that Charles and Elizabeth, and her kinsman of England, are deep in the plot."

The suspense with which Louis list-

ened to this perfidious confederation, was almost insufferable.

"And this it is," exclaimed he, "to put our trust in princes! — Ungrateful, treacherous Elizabeth!"

Wharton seized the moment of speechless indignation which followed this agonized apostrophe; and pourtraying in vivid colours, the utter selfishness of Charles and the house of Brunswick, he urged Louis, by every consequent argument, to abjure the worthless cause; and to take a powerful and noble revenge, by embracing that of legitimacy, in the rights of the Electress in Germany, and those of James Stuart, in the land of his maternal ancestors. — The reasoning of Wharton was forcible and clear, full of energy and conviction, and an eloquence, that might have charmed an angel from its orb, '*to list his sweet and honey'd sentences.*'

He urged, that the discovery of the plot to the King and Queen of Spain,

before it could be brought to bear against Ripperda, would give him just the advantage of turning a full charged battery upon the enemy who had planted it for his destruction. — In that instant of proved fidelity to the royal pair, and in their proud shews of perfect confidence in him, he might change their politics from the north to the south pole. — A word from him to Philip, would revoke his guarantee to the pragmatic sanction; the Electress's son would have a direct path to the throne on the death of the Emperor; and a brave army of Spaniards would put Philip in possession of Gibraltar. While this was transacting on the continent, England itself might shrink under the foot of Ripperda; for Wharton intimated, that by the armed assistance of some powers, whose politics he had turned into the same direction, it would be no difficult achievement to replace James Stuart on the throne of his ancestors.

"Here, Louis de Montemar," exclaimed the Duke, "is a revenge worthy the descendant of heroes and of sovereigns! Though you wear not crowns, you may dispense them; and Cæsar can do no more!"

Louis grasped the hand of his friend. — "Oh, Wharton! I am weary of sovereigns, and crowns, and sceptres. They are the price of men's souls; of all their earthly happiness, of all their future felicity! — Talk not to me of embracing the cause of any one of them. When I clasp the splendid nothings, they crumble into dust in my hands." —

Louis walked forward with a rapid pace. His soul was tossed on the billows of a tempestuous ocean, in the midst of which he saw his father perishing. — He stopped abruptly. "But where is this document? — How can I obtain it?"

"It is yours, on a condition; and with it the implement of your release from Otteline!"

" I care not for my own release, but for my father! my betrayed, my virtuous father! — Name the condition."

Wharton did not answer immediately, but walked a few moments by the side of his friend, with his eyes bent downwards; then, looking suddenly up, while the bright moon shone full upon his varying countenance, he gaily said: —

" Is there any thing it is possible for me to propose, that could move you to precipitate yourself over that stone wall, as you did from the rocks of Bamborough?"

" No;" replied Louis, with a wan and wintery smile; " nothing that you would propose."

" Having met my novice at the Eleusinian mysteries," cried Wharton laughing, " I marvel I should seem to question his initiation! — The way is now plain before us. — Go with me to-night, when that blabbing duenna in the sky is gone to bed, and you shall have

the whole policy of Austria in your bosom."

"Where?" said Louis, not understanding the Duke, and strangely doubtful of his manner.

"That disclosure is beyond my credentials. But when you are there, the awful secret of conspiracy will not be revealed in caverns, dungeons, and darkness. You will find a place to take the grateful soul, and lap it in Elysium!"

The pulse in Louis's temples beat hard; yet he was determined not to anticipate, but make Wharton explain himself.

"I do not understand you; who is it I am to see?"

"A woman; a lovely, fond woman!"

The manner of his saying this, was a stroke, like that of an iron rod on the heart of his friend; and he cast the hand from him, that clasped his arm.

"What, for another leap?" cried the Duke; "but you are out of practice,

and may break more necks than your own!"

"And what is my resource?" desperately demanded Louis.

"A simple one; to smile upon a woman. A pleasant one; to be beloved by one who can fix no bonds on you but those of love, while she bestows herself upon you, and gives you the life and honour of your father!"

"With the loss of my own, and the perdition of my soul! Is this the alternative I expected to hear from the lips of my only friend, in this fearful extremity of my fate!"

Louis had covered his raging temples with his hand, and he hastened forward with distracted swiftness.

"De Montemar! This is folly or deception," cried Wharton. "There are virtues for every season of life; and I thought you had been made sensible that it is the privilege of manhood to make all nature subservient to his interest and

his pleasure. What took you, night after night, to the scenes in which I have met you? Anchorites are not accustomed to pay those courts a second visit; and you are not the better in my honest eyes, for preserving the cowl, when I know its vows have been broken?"

Louis knew that he had deserved this inference; and he inwardly reproached his father's policy, in thinking it wisdom to incur such suspicion on his blameless life. How would the involuntary accusation have been embittered, had he known that the Empress drew the same conclusion! He would then have doubly felt, that his sacrifice to such vile appearance, instead of propitiating his rivals, had dishonoured him with his friends, and become an instrument in the hands of his enemies. Humbled to the soul, he merely replied.

"Wharton, you injure me."

"It may be so; and I am sorry for it," answered the Duke, "though I can-

not guess how. I offer you the sublime duty of rescuing your father from treason; and the enjoyment of a banquet, rifled from the sanctuary of your deadliest foe! Can you be a man, and proof against such sweet revenge?"

Louis strode on in perturbed silence. Wharton continued his arguments with vehemence and subtle consistency, on the supposition that he must admit his friend's repugnance to be sincere. Still, Louis did not reply; but proofs of his contending soul convulsed the features his agitated hand tried to conceal. The Duke, as well as his friend, had much at stake in bringing this part of his negociation to bear. He tried the effect of ridicule on the wretched and despairing Louis; and to one of his arguments, he at last extorted a reply.

"I will not purchase even the life of my father, by my own conscious guilt. If I am proof against my own heart, in so dear a cause, shall I not be proof

against the poor allurements of vanity and sense? And are such arguments yours? Oh, Wharton! I cannot call that peculiarly manly, which are the peculiar pursuits of the lowest of our species. Any man may succumb to his appetites and his passions! You say most men do; and that you, even you, sometimes find it policy and pastime to follow in the track!" He paused, and then added with a piercing look, and a smile of despair, "what, if the boy de Montemar has ambition to go beyond ye!"

"Yes; I know you do not want ambition," replied the Duke, with an answering smile, "I remember, some dozen months ago, with that same eagle glance, you likened yourself to Ammon's godlike son! He did not reject the flaming brand that fired the palace of his enemies, nor the lovely Thais that presented it!"

"Wharton," said Louis, looking on him with severity, "had Clytus been

such a counsellor, he would have deserved the javelin of his friend?"

"My breast is ready," cried the Duke, "if thou hast the heart to throw it!"

"I would I could, and cut away the worser part of thine!" answered Louis, "I have seen more of it to-night, than I wish to remember."

"But what message," returned Wharton, "am I to remember, to carry to her, who is awaiting your slow appearance? Is she to give you herself, your father's safety, and your own freedom? Or, do you reject all? For *all* you must accept, or none; and then the scrupulous de Montemar, may go wash his hands of the name he has consigned to infamy; and beatify the paternal head he relinquishes to the block!"

This demand was made with scornful seriousness; with a ruthless application to the feelings of a son. Louis felt the firm collectiveness of a man determined to live or die by one line of

action. He turned on Wharton with a fixed eye.

"Tell her," returned he, "that father and son may perish together; that their names may be followed by falsehood to the scaffold and the grave; but I never will purchase exemption from any one of these evils, by the prostitution of my heart and my conscience to vice in man or woman!"

Wharton grasped his arm.

"What superstition is this? What madness? — This message would undo you!"

"With whom, Wharton?"

"With the woman you scorn. Her revenge would exasperate your enemies!"

"Let it!" returned Louis, "since she has bereft me of my friend. — Wharton, we are no more to each other!"

"De Montemar?"

"In my extremest need, when I threw myself on your breast for counsel and for aid; when I believed you Heaven's

delegated angel, to save my father and myself; you would have betrayed him to the dishonour of being bought by the guilt of his son; you would have betrayed me to hell's deepest perdition!"

As Louis spoke with the stern calmness of a divorced heart, Wharton became other than he had ever seen him. With the fires of resentment flashing from his resplendent eyes, he too collected the force of his soul in the mightiness of a last appeal. He spoke with rapidity for many minutes. He repeated, and redoubled his arguments; and then he added in a calmer voice:

"My heart is a man's heart, and therefore is sensible to this stroke from ungrateful friendship. But you now know that I can shame your superstition, by bearing insult upon insult, when my patience may recall you to yourself!"

"I am recalled to myself," returned Louis; "my superstition is, to depend on God alone for the preservation of my

father. If he fall, God has his wise purpose in the judgement, and I shall find resignation. For you, Wharton — that I have loved so long and so steadily — there may be a pang there — when he I trusted above all men, has proved himself my direst enemy!"

"Your enemy, de Montemar? your direst enemy? The words have passed your lips, were engendered in your heart, and my ears have heard them! It is easier to hate, than to love; to discard a friend, than to accept a mistress; to plunge into the gulph of ruin, than to avoid it through a path of happiness! Madman! Did I not pity the folly I marvel at, I would rouse you by a tale. But no more. When you next hear of, or see Philip Wharton, you will understand the import of your own words. — You shall know what he is, when he proclaims himself the enemy of Ripperda and de Montemar!"

Louis stood immoveable, with his eyes on the ground, while Wharton vehe-

mently uttered this denunciation. He remained some time, like a pillar transfixed, in the earth, after the Duke had disappeared. The first thing that recalled him to motion, was the profound stillness around, after the sounds of that voice, which till now, was ever to him the music of heaven. The horrible conviction of all that had passed, pressed at once upon his soul; the dear and agonizing remembrance of how he had loved him; and raising his arms to the dark heavens with a fearful cry of expiring nature, he threw himself upon the ground.

The falling dew, and the howling wind raised him not from that bed of lonely despair. And when he did leave the dismal scene of this last act of his miseries, it was like the spectre of the man who had entered it.

CHAP. XII.

WHARTON left Vienna, the morning after his separation from Louis in the garden of the chateau. From that day, Louis moved through his duties like a man in a dream. He had dispatched a special courier to his father, with as much of the conspiracy, as he had collected from his now estranged friend; and he confessed how the whole might have been in his possession, could he have brought his conscience to accord with the condition.

Hoping that even this obscure intimation might be some beacon to his father; himself went perturbedly on; racked with suspence, and feeling alone and unarmed amidst a host of ambushed foes. Except when obliged to

go abroad on business, he shut himself within the walls of his house; for he now doubted every man who approached him; and the specious courtesies of women were yet more intolerable.

The Empress did not condescend to intimate how she had considered his proposition respecting the ceremony of her daughter; but she sent her chamberlain to inform him, that the Emperor had fixed the day of her favourite's nuptials, when they should be solemnized in a private manner. Louis loathed the very characters of Otteline's name; and shuddered at any new bonds to a society, associated to him with every disastrous remembrance. His soul was stricken; and the evils which appeared in visionary approach before his father's path, and his own, seemed too big for conflict. He felt he could have sustained the fiercest fields of war; could have died with an upward eye, and an exulting spirit on its

honourable bed. But to be a hero under the attacks of the coward breath of man; to stand before an obloquy that threatened the annihilation of his father's glory, and his own respected name; was more than he dared to contemplate: and in appalled expectation, he mechanically prepared to obey the unwelcome behests of Elizabeth.

He was giving his slow orders to a *maitre d' hotel* respecting some arrangements for his future bride, when a letter was put into his hands, which had come by a circuitous route from Sardinia; and which he ought to have received a month or two ago. It was from Don Ferdinand d' Osorio. Until the public reception of Ripperda at Vienna, Don Ferdinand was ignorant where to address the cousin of his beloved Alice; and to express, what he felt, his sense of the justice of her appeal against his extorted bonds; and to acknowledge the delicacy with which Louis had seconded her remonstrances.

When he heard that the Marquis de Montemar was in Germany with his father, he lost no time in writing; and entrusted his letter to a Sardinian gentleman going to Vienna. But the traveller took a wide tour; and did not bring the letter to its destination until two-months after its date.

Louis dismissed his servant, and breaking the seal, read as follows: —

"*My dear de Montemar,*

"I should be ashamed to confess the justice of all your remarks on my conduct with regard to your sweet cousin, my ever-beloved Alice, could I not at the same time assure you that I have obeyed her wishes to the fullest extent, and followed your advice implicitly. I have written to her, and to Mrs. Coningsby; and she is perfectly free: every bond is relinquished, but that of the heart. If her's be as firm as mine, we may confidently await the holy vows, which, I trust, will yet unite us.

"You must have seen enough of my excellent father, to know that he has one error amongst his many perfections; and that it is an irreconcileable abhorrence of the Protestant religion. However, though I should despair of ever bringing him to tolerate its tenets, I have a hope of compassing his consent to my marriage with its gentle professor. Marcella, my only, and very dear sister, (and who was intended from her cradle for a nunnery,) must assist me in this project. She loves me ardently; and her power with my father, except on one point, is almost omnipotent. It is this point, on which I ground my proceedings: she must obey him; and may gratify her enthusiastic nature, by serving me against herself. Her doom, poor girl! is rather a hard one, as it was absolutely fixed before she was born. My father's youthful passions, (which are now hushed to such monastic stillness!) were the cause of her dedication. I will tell you

the story; and then you may judge of my chance of success through her means.

"When my father was a young man, his character was too much like my own, self-willed and impetuous; and in affairs of love, as you will see by the sequel, he was even more determined than his son. At an early age, he acquired a great reputation in the army; and at the conclusion of the war in Italy, went on a party of pleasure to Vienna; then the gayest city in the world.

"During the reign of the Austrian monarchs in Spain, many of our grandees intermarried with the German nobility. It so happened between our family and that of the Austrian Sinzendorff's. My father, then full of life and enterprize, went to the old Count Sinzendorff's. The present Chancellor of that name was then young and thoughtless; and boasted to his cousin, of the great beauty of his youngest sister; who his family had chosen to sacrifice to the fortunes of the elder branches,

by consigning her to a nunnery at the age of nineteen. — My father accompanied Sinzendorff to the convent, where they passed some hours with the beautiful novice; for she had yet four months of probation, before she was to pronounce the irrevocable vows. Suffice it to say, a mutual passion was conceived between the two cousins, and my father persuaded her to elope with him. — They fled into Switzerland, where they were married. In the course of time, absolution for the sacrilege was obtained from the Pope; but my father could never obtain it from himself. — His wife's first and second children died in the birth. They were both daughters. He believed it a judgment on his crime, and tried to reconcile offended heaven, by making a vow, that should his next infant be spared, and of the same sex; and he live to the appointed period, he would dedicate it to a monastic life, at the same age in which he seduced her mother from the

altar. The next child was myself. Two or three more infant deaths intervened before the birth of Marcella. But from the hour in which she saw the light, and continued to live, a golden crucifix was hung to her neck, and she was always addressed by the name of the little nun.

" As she grew in beauty and sweetness, my mother regretted the determined immolation of her child; but my father would listen to no pleadings, to spare such variety of excellence to the world. He demanded the sacrifice for the appeasing of his conscience; and poor Marcella, though educated with all the accomplishments of her sex, and full of as many graces as ever charmed in woman, silently awaited her gloomy destiny. I remember having often seen my father stand impenetrable to my mother's reproaches for consigning all this youth and loveliness to the cloister, and then he has calmly answered :—

" Antoinetta, I have covered the

blameless offering with all these garlands, to render her a more costly sacrifice at my hands; to make my heart drop blood when she is led to the altar; and then, your sin and mine, my erring wife, may find a veil!

"My mother doated on my sister, and she could not see the justice of expiating her own offence, by the misery of her child. — In this spirit, she too, made a vow; and that was, never to be separated from her daughter, till her father's cruel dedication shut her from the world. By a most unhappy fatality, the governess my mother engaged for Marcella when a child, was the widow of one of the illustrious cavaliers who came to the continent with your James II. She was a learned and a pious woman, and brought up my sister in all her own principles. — My father led too busy a life, to investigate deeper than the fruits; and those, he said were good. But a year ago, the English lady died; and on her death-bed, she declared

herself a Protestant! In short, Marcella had been too long under her tuition, to become a willing *devotee* to the monastic rites of the Romish Church. A superstitious horror of this discovery prevented my father questioning her on the subject; but he proposed her immediate removal to a convent. My mother opposed her vow to his; not to suffer her child to leave her, till the time of her being professed. — Marcella cast herself on her knees, and implored, by every thing sacred in earth and heaven, that her father would not compel her to take vows against which her soul revolted. She engaged to live a life of celibacy; and never to see any persons but her own family; if he would spare her those dreadful oaths, and allow her to remain for ever with her mother. But in the essential point, my mother and sister pleaded in vain. He granted her continuance at home, till the year of her noviciate; but that year

must come, and it will commence next January.

"Being aware, from my father's pertinacity on these subjects, that if my sister does not then resign herself to her fate, she will be dragged to meet it, (though he would rather purchase her free consent at any price ;) I determined on trying to turn her sad destiny to my happiness. When I pledged my faith to your dear cousin, I did it under a belief that I could persuade Marcella to do that willingly, which she knows she must do, even under violence. I want her to make my father's sanction to my marriage with Alice, the condition of her performing all his vows, without further hesitation!

"On my return from Lindisfarne, (without then venturing to open my whole mind to her on the subject,) I prepared the way, by describing the dear family at the pastorage, in such colours as to excite her particular interest for the

fair and tender Alice. My mother's gratitude was eloquent towards Mr. Athelstone and Mrs. Coningsby; and again and again she wished to see the latter and her daughters in Spain, that she might repay them in some sort, for their cares of her son.

"My father and I soon came to Sardinia on public affairs; but we return to Spain in the autumn. I shall then unbosom myself to Marcella; and, I doubt not, she will concede that to my happiness, which, should she withhold it, would only leave me to misery, without prolonging the time of her own liberty.

"At present she is leading an almost monastic life; and the difference cannot be great, whether it be past in a real cell amongst the Ursulines, and daily cheered by visits from her mother; or in a cloistered apartment at home, which is fitted up with every similar austerity, and has no advantage but the nominal distinction of being in her father's house.

"I hope every thing from Marcella's *free consent*, and consequent influence with my father; and, when it is given, dear de Montemar, (if you are not too absorbed in politics and Imperial favour, to continue your interest in the happiness of faithful love!) you shall hear again, from your sincerely obliged friend,

"Sardinia. *Ferdinand d'Osorio.*"

Louis closed the letter, with every warm wish for the happiness of his endeared Alice; but while he joined the man she loved, in the heartfelt orison, he could not but regret the strain of selfishness he saw throughout his character. He hardly pitied the amiable Marcella, in the destiny she appeared to deprecate, and to which her brother so coolly rivetted her reluctant hands, while he pretended to deplore her fate. In the state Louis was in, between man's perfidy and woman's wiles, any refuge from the world,

seemed a heaven to him. The passions and opinions of youth are in extremes; all delight, or all misery; all virtues, or all crimes; no happiness but in rapture; no grief but in despair. But Louis's griefs were now heavy enough, not to need the overcharging of fancy; and when he thought of all that he had suffered since his last fearful meeting with Wharton in the garden, he could not but exclaim,

"Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest!"

He was scared from the world by its vices; and sometimes longed to repose his wearied spirit in the grave. But he was now only entered into the lists; the contest was only begun; and he must brace his sinews to continue the combat, for which his ambitious soul had panted while he lay in the peacefulness of his native home!

On the very morning, whose evening

was to see him perform his extorted vows, to her who had once been the object of d'Osorio's passion, two couriers arrived from Spain. The one was Castanos, who came to Louis; the other was from the Marquis de Castellor, and went direct to Count Routemberg.

The volcano had burst; and all the power, and all the honours of Ripperda were swept away! De Castellor was now in his seat; and when Castanos came off, the Duke was stunned into stupor, overcome by the illimitable ruin.

Of the particulars of the catastrophe, Louis did not hear, till he could question Castanos; for the Spaniard, knowing the tidings of the packet he brought, had presented it in silence and withdrew. Louis opened it impatiently; and took out his father's letter. He could hardly expect it to be an answer to his warning epistle, for the time appeared too short for an interchange of messengers; but eager to know the complexion of things

in Spain, he broke the seal. The letter was brief, and scarcely legible; but it was sufficient to announce the completion of his worst fears: that his father was no more the minister of Spain; that he was abandoned by the King; insulted by the nobles; and outraged with every species of ingratitude by the people he had served to his own overthrow!

The bolt was then fallen! And, every hand in which his father trusted, had assisted to launch it!

Louis was transfixed with the letter in his hand. Now it was, that he saw the world unmasked before him; now it was, that he saw the views of life unveiled; now it was, that all creation seemed to pass from before him with a frightful noise, and he stood alone in chaos. The smiling face of man was blotted out; gratitude, virtue, were annihilated; and life had no longer an object! What had his father been? All that was noble and

disinterested. What had he done for Spain? Redeemed her from poverty, contempt, and suffering; to riches, honour, and happiness. And what was his reward? He was cast, like the reprobate angel from on high, and trampled upon by his conquerors, as though his actions had been like him he resembled in his fall!

How long he sat in motionless, sightless gaze, upon the fatal letter, he knew not; but he was aroused by the entrance of his secretary, who informed him Count Sinzendorff awaited him in the next chamber.

Louis saw he was now called upon to breast the first wave that was to break on him from the deluge which had overwhelmed his father. He rallied his mental strength; and, looking upwards, to implore the staying hand from above, he proceeded with the composure of inevitable ruin, to the presence of the Chancellor. The virtuous statesman advanced

to meet him, while his countenance proclaimed that he knew all, and sympathized with its victim.

Their conference was short; but it implied to Louis, that his delegated reign, as well as that of his father, was at an end. Sinzendorff had been in the Imrial cabinet, when Routemberg laid his dispatches before the Emperor; and to spare the upright son of Ripperda, some rude disclosure of their contents, the Chancellor took upon himself to inform him, that he was to transfer his portfolio to the Count de Monteleone, who had just arrived at Vienna.

On Louis thanking the minister for his generous interference, Sinzendorff took his hand.

"I will always bear my testimony to the fair dealing of the son, and to the disinterested conduct of the father, though we should never meet again."

Even while the words were on the lips of the chancellor, a message arrived from

the Empress to Louis, to hasten his attendance at the Altheim apartments.— He smiled gloomily, in answer to Sinzendorff's smile of dubious meaning.

"I had forgotten!" said the chancellor, "you have yet a fair bond to Vienna; and this need not be a parting day."

"It is a portentous day, of most unpropitious nuptials!" replied Louis, hardly knowing what he uttered; "but every day, and every where, I must be honoured in the approbation of Count Sinzendorff."

The hour was beyond the time in which he ought to have been in the imperial boudoir, to await the hand of his intended bride. What change in her wishes, his changed fortune might produce, he thought not of. In a postscript to his father's letter, he had found hastily written:

"Events prove that you have done right with regard to the Empress's friend, if she is now your wife."

This approbation, was a new bond on the sacrifice; and he threw himself into his carriage, to obey the peremptory summons of Elizabeth!

All was solitude in the first three chambers of the Altheim apartments. As he hurried forward with the desperate step of a man, who had lost so much that the last surrender was a matter of no moment, he saw the Empress in the fourth; but she sat alone. Louis bowed at the entrance, and again as he drew near. She was pale as himself; and did not look up while she addressed him.

"You are come, thus tardily, to ratify your vows? To redeem your pledged honour?"

"I come to obey Your Majesty's commands," replied he.

"Your vows may be returned to you;" answered Elizabeth, "but the honour that was never your's, cannot be redeemed."

"Dare I say," replied Louis, "that I do not understand Your Majesty?"

"And yet the words are plain," returned she, "they are to tell you, that low as Ripperda has fallen, he never can reach the depths of his son."

"Madam," exclaimed he, "I am now a ruined man! the malice of his enemies has cast my fortunes, with my father, to the ground; but he shall not be humbled in his son. Virtue is the soul of his being, virtue is my inheritance; and I implore of Your Majesty to say, of what I am accused? Who are my accusers?"

She looked up; and mistaking the ravages of anguish on his fine countenance, for those of guilt, she shuddered with a loathing sensation, and answered indignantly.

"How dare that false tongue profane the name of virtue, by connecting it with that of your father and yourself?—The world teems with your accusers; and he bears witness to their veracity, by not

having ventured one line to me in his defence."

She then steadily ennumerated the Duke's imputed treacheries. That it was past a doubt, his clandestine coalition with the Duke of Wharton; that their secret meetings had been traced; that he had commenced a correspondence with James Stuart; and that, from what motives, his mad ambition could alone tell; it was well known he was playing in Madrid the counterpart of Wharton's political game at Vienna. In short, he covertly abetted every machination against the Empire, and the house of Brunswick: — "and," concluded the Empress, "I am constrained to believe, that, to me and mine, his overthrow is as timely, as it is irrevocable."

This charge on his father transported Louis beyond the forms of ceremony; and with all the eloquence of truth and filial piety, he burst forth into a defence of his integrity, which, to any other

than the possessed ears of Elizabeth, must have carried resistless conviction; but with an impetuosity equal to his own, she interrupted him:—

"Cease!" cried she, "Hard, unblushing parricide of all thy father's fame! Dissembling, cozening de Montemar! In every word, and look, and gesture, I see the tempter of Ripperda's ruin! He was Honour's self, till he brought the serpent to his bosom, in the shape of his perfidious son. Shame to thee, young man, and think of the price for which you sold him to Duke Wharton."

Louis was confounded by this charge upon himself, as the instigator of his father's asserted treasons; but he did not shrink, or withdraw his assured eye from the face of the Empress.

"That Wharton was my friend," said he, "I did not withhold from Your Majesty; that my father was, and is, his

implacable enemy, I have just affirmed: and that it is not in the power of Duke Wharton, or of any other man, to draw us from our allegiance to Spain, and our fidelity to you — name our accusers, and I am ready to maintain it with my blood."

Elizabeth had now restrained the feelings, which some pleading recollections of Ripperda had awakened, and with haughty composure, she replied: —

"You may revenge the discovery of your falsehood, by the lives of your accusers; but the times are past, when truth was proved by bloodshed. Yet, as you demand it, I shall not refuse you knowledge of your crimes. They are simple, but they are comprehensive. — First, your nightly visitations to the Electress of Bavaria, under the disguise of the Chevalier de Phaffenberg! — "

"It is false!" cried Louis, placing his hand on his heart, and looking

up to heaven; "by the eternal judgment, I swear it is false!"

Elizabeth raised her hands in horror.

"Matchless villain!" cried she.

Then frowning terribly, with a redoubling detestation in every feature, she rapidly continued: —

"And have you the audacity to swear, you never visited her at all? That you did not steal from her house by a secret passage, on the night of the destruction of the opera-house? That you have not had clandestine meetings with the arch-counsellor of her treasons? And that this rebellious pair, have not stimulated your presumption, to draw my daughter to disgrace her rank by listening to a passion from you?"

Louis was too much appalled by the two leading charges, to shew any surprise at the third. Had Wharton then betrayed that they had met? That the preserver of his mistress, had once en-

tered her palace?—The blood which mantled on his cheek at the accusation, faded before this direful suspicion; and his eyes, dropping under the indignant beams of the Empress, told her that in this instance at least, his face was honest.

"You do not dare repeat the perjury!" cried she; "leave my presence."

"Not as a guilty man!" cried he, looking up with the bold desperation of innocence; "I have now, nothing to gain or to lose with the Empress of Germany, but my honour; and again I affirm, that under no name but that of Louis de Montemar, did I ever enter the palace of the Electress of Bavaria. I never did enter it but once, and that was on the night Your Majesty mentions. I have also met the Duke of Wharton, by accident, in the courts of this palace, and in various assemblies; and by compulsive necessity, twice in the garden of the chateau:—but we never meet again!"

Here Louis stopped. For these charges had so struck on his heart, (as he believed they could only have been inflicted by the threatened vengeance of his friend;) that he forgot the one respecting the Princess.

"You own that you have visited the Electress, and communed with her emissary!" cried Elizabeth, "avow your object, and it will answer to the point to which your effrontery has not yet spoken. Was it to dethrone my husband, and make my daughter a prisoner to the Bavarian Empress? It would have crowned the adventure, to have rewarded her champion with the hand of a captive Princess!"

Stung to the soul, Louis threw himself at her feet, to proclaim his innocence of all these inferences, before heaven and her. But she started back, as from a viper in her path.

"Base hypocrite!" cried she, "I am not to be moved by subtilty.—I know how you dedicated that attitude to the

dishonour of your future sovereign. But she is now rescued from your arts — this foot crushed your pernicious resemblance, as the heaven you outrage, will one day do yourself. You may grovel in the dust, but I will hear no more."

Louis rose calmly from his knee.

"Empress," said he, "I solicit for justice no more; but I owe it to my honour, to declare, that my presence in the Bavarian palace was occasioned by a service I had accidentally performed to one of its inhabitants. My meetings with Duke Wharton were an attempt to penetrate into a conspiracy which I knew was forming against my father; but I failed in my purpose. The enemies of the Duke de Ripperda have annihilated his political life, and plunged his son into the same abyss of calumny; but I am not yet sunk to baseness, nor hypocrisy. It was not to the Empress of Germany I knelt, but to the power of justice in her person. But that is past; and I feel, that could

birth give dignity, my ancestors of Nassau reigned in this very palace! And, if devotion to their successor, be a virtue in their posterity, mine have been faithful to the Emperor, to the last article in the treaty; and I have been devoted to Your Majesty, to the sacrifice of my happiness. This we have done! But, young as I am, I have lived to see, that when power is lost, birth is nothing; and virtue, nothing, but to the possessor's heart!"

The face of Elizabeth blazed with resentment.

"And this is your answer to your daring passion for my daughter?"

"The Emperor knows, I never dared to love the Princess," replied Louis, "and to the honour of his Imperial word, I refer Your Majesty."

Louis bowed with a backward step, as he was preparing to withdraw.

"Incomparable insolence!" exclaimed she; "stop, and know that he is your accuser!"

Louis smiled with so insufferable an air of scornful superiority, that she was momentarily struck dumb; but violently extricating her powers of speech, she sternly replied: —

"Every aim of that towering spirit is known to him and to me; but every aim is crushed!"

"Human power cannot crush my aims!" rejoined Louis; "they are to uphold my father's honour and my own truth. And while he deserves the reverence of the world, what can prove that they are lost!"

The Empress's hand was on her beating forehead, but she turned, even fiercely to his question.

"The position in which he now lies, by the determined falsehoods of his son!" replied she, "return to him, covered with dishonour; return to him, bearing the curse of the friend of his virtue — of the mother of Maria Theresa! Return to

him, spurned by the Countess Altheim; and abhorred and stigmatized by all honest men!"

Elizabeth left the blameless victim of all this wrath, standing in the middle of the floor. Every word she breathed, every anathema she denounced, seemed urged by the quick revenge of Duke Wharton! All justice, all fair inference was denied him! His father and himself were alike shut out from the bosom of friendship; were alike betrayed by them in whom they had most confidently trusted! The burthen was almost too much for him to bear. And rushing from the apartment; he knew no more of what he said or did, till he found himself thrown upon a chair, and alone, in his own chamber.

CHAP. XIII.

The official transfers were soon made. Monteleone received the diploma of *Chargé des Affaires.* The Emperor and Empress refused the usual forms of admitting the recalled minister to a parting audience; and not a man, Spaniard, nor Austrian, appeared within the gates of the *Palais d'Espagne,* to pay a farewell compliment to the son of their benefactor and friend.

The finger of royal disgrace was on him; and all fled the spot on which it lay. Solitude was around his lately crowded courts; silence in every room; and when business took him abroad, avoidance met him in every passing countenance. The ladies, who had opened their houses to him, now shut up their

daughters till he had left the city; but few needed the precaution; for with his fortunes had vanished the most powerful charms, even of Louis de Montemar. This mortification, however, was spared him; as in the lofty consciousness of his own integrity, and as high a disdain of the injustice he had received, he went no where to solicit compassion nor propitiate candour. But had he known their present sentiments, the assurance that Countess Altheim breathed the same, would have been sufficient in his eyes to transform the deed of banishment to one of welcome liberty. In the midst of all this gloom of misery, his freedom from her, shone like a star in the dark hemisphere, that promised night was not to remain for ever.

When his lonely carriage passed the barrier, (for all his state attendants were left to the new ambassador,) he threw himself back, and exclaimed. " How did I enter you, proud, ungrateful city?

Full of hope, and enterprise, and honour! How do I quit you? Bereft by you of all! Ruined, dishonoured, desolate!"

The barb was in his heart. It was there, in the image of Wharton; and it corroded with a slow and deadly poison. Still as he journeyed forward, and compared events with time, he could not but feel some satisfaction, when he found by calculation, that had he been weak enough to yield to the proposal he had rejected, and accepted the discovery of the authors of this vast overthrow, by the surrender of his innocence; it would still have been too late to prevent his father's fall in Spain. The Empress had shewn herself too entirely prejudiced, to have been affected by any document he could have presented. And while he thought on this, with gratitude to heaven for his firmness; he conceived a deeper horror of the friend, who might have seduced him to such guilt, and left him no other payment than unavailing remorse, and

deserved infamy. In his own person, he was now convinced of the truth of his father's charge against this once beloved Wharton. That *he could bereave, but not bestow!* In the garden of the Chateau, he had promised a preservation he could not have performed; on the same spot he had threatened a vengeance he had now taken! Louis attributed all Elizabeth's accusations to the resentment of his treacherous friend; and by that act considered himself despoiled by Wharton of all that was most dear to him.

"I will forget him!" cried he to himself, "my honoured father, I come to thee, to stand by thee alone! To uphold and cheer thee! To uphold and cheer myself, with the conviction that I yet possess thee! To glory in the virtue that has given thee the fate of Aristides!"

In a pass of the Appenines, Louis's solitary vehicle was met by a courier from Spain. He brought a credential from Martini, which announced him as his

brother Lorenzo, who had lately been received by Ripperda into his household in the quality of a page. The young man came full speed, to meet the recalled minister; and to hasten his arrival at Madrid; where the Duke lay, in a state to hear no other counsellor, to receive no other comfort.

Lorenzo got into the carriage with his master's son; and detailed the particulars of his mission, as they proceeded rapidly to Genoa. Louis listened to the narrative with unshrinking fortitude.

Immediately on Ripperda's return from Vienna, the King had published an edict, that a revision of all sentences, and a review of all transactions by judges, governors, collectors, and every other kind of royal officers, should be subjected to the cognizance of the Duke of Ripperda. This immense accession of authority put the individual interest of every man in Spain into his hands; and made him no less terrible in the city and provinces, than formid-

able to the grandees, and an object of jealousy to the King's sons. In short, he was such a minister, as never had been seen before; a kind of Vicar-general, whose power wanted nothing of supreme sovereignty, but the permanency of a throne.

Lorenzo observed, that his brother had owned to him, that, from the Duke's free exercise of one branch of this extensive authority, he had foreseen a rupture between his master and the majority of the Spanish nobility. Since his return from Vienna, his manner to them, and to society at large, was completely changed. He no longer conciliated, but compelled. He summoned the greatest and most powerful of the grandees before his tribunal, whether the appeal came from prince or peasant; and did such strict justice, that none could reproach, though all murmured: the great, for being made to feel there was a power above their wills; and the little, that the laws of Spain should be dispensed by a man

who had been born out of her dominions. While his home policy was good, and efficient; and his outward politics were only held in the balance, by the tergiversation of Austria, there were yet men in the cabinet who privately ridiculed his plans as a mere political romance. And he found it so. For what is speculatively right, is generally practically wrong. Men's probable actions are calculated by the law of reason; but their performance is usually the result of caprice.

In the midst of the universal discontent excited by the agents of his numerous rivals and enemies, the main mine was sprung, and Ripperda's fortunes received their final blow. The King and Queen of Spain were made to believe the most contradictory, preposterous, and terrible things of his private intentions. And, in one hour, he received three successive messages from the King, to inform him, that his offices in the state,

the army, and the commercial interests of his country, were taken from him. That Grimaldo, the Marquis de Castellor, and the Count de Paz, filled his places; and that a courier was dispatched to Vienna, to recall his son.

Lorenzo related, that the intelligence of the first messenger, which took from him the office of prime minister, was delivered in such a manner as to excite so ungarded an indignation in the Duke, that he extended his reproaches on his enemies, even to the King; and in the tempest of his wrath, uttered things of His Majesty, the report of which doubly incensed the Monarch and his Queen. This messenger was Baptista Orendayn, the nephew of the Count de Paz. The new ministers were well aware of his insidious powers to insult and to betray, and they selected him to convey their triumph to the Duke. Ripperda, having exhausted himself under the influence of the young sycophant's irrit-

ating sympathy, remained in gloomy silence during the communications of the two succeeding messengers. When they were all departed from him, he sat for an hour motionless, in intense thought, with his hands clasped in each other, and his eyes fixed on the floor. Martini passed to and fro in the room, without notice from his master. At last the Duke suddenly started up, as one out of a trance.

"I will go to the Queen!" cried he.

It was now about nine o'clock, in a fine autumnal evening. He directed his carriage to the *Buen Retiro*. He arrived, but was refused admittance. He returned to his palace, and called for his secretary; but no secretary was to be found. Not one of the officers of any of his late numerous offices were now in attendance. All were fled with the stream of power; and nothing but amazed and alarmed family domestics, were seen

gliding about the galleries, in silence and dismay.

Castanos, however, presented himself; and by him Ripperda wrote to his son and the Empress, and dispatched him to Vienna: but Monteleone encountered him on the way. He soon found the old Spaniard had a price; and having purchased the perusal of the packet, suffered the son's hurried billet to pass; but the resistless appeal to Elizabeth he committed to the flames.

While Ripperda was writing other letters, his fixed attention was at last diverted, by an unusal sort of tumult in the square before his palace. He was accustomed, at his return, or issuing from his gates, to be hailed and lackied by the acclamations of the populace. His largesses were abundant, and the uproar of vehement thanksgiving, was ever on the watch from the venal multitude. But, for the purpose of the time,

the dole was now doubled at the porches of the new ministers: and the same mob, who, four-and-twenty hours before had rent the air with shouts of *long live the great Duke Ripperda!* now tore their lungs with curses on his name, and threats of vengeance for the ruin of Spain.

The madness of the people seemed to grow on their own violence; and the fury with which they assailed his gates with flambeaux, clubs and hatchets, left little doubt that they meant to fire the palace, and massacre its inhabitants. Martini urged his master to withdraw privately from the danger.

"What?" cried Ripperda, "fly like a coward and a criminal before the ungrateful rabble of Madrid? Never; though their king were at their head, to urge the murder of their benefactor. I am dispossessed, but am not fallen; and that, myself will shew them."

As he spoke, he rushed towards the

open balcony, which projected over the great gate, and extended his arm to the people, in the act to speak. The blazing lights in the apartment behind him, and the broad glare from the torches beneath, shewed in a moment the noble figure of the Duke, and his commanding gesture.

Struck with surprise, the dead silence of profound awe, for an instant stilled the whole assembly. But before the big words of vehement indignation could burst from the lips of Ripperda, a watchful emissary of his enemies fired a carabine direct at the balcony. Aggression once committed, every restraint of reverence and shame were cast away; and others, near the assassin, echoed his cry of "death to the heretic!"—Martini threw his arms around his master, and dragging him within the balcony, forcibly shut the doors. The Duke turned on him a look of unutterable meaning.

"You would be more in fashion," cried he, "if you stabbed your patron! Do it, Martini, and spare me from the knives of that ungrateful mob!"

Martini urged his lord, on the only plea to which he would now listen; to save himself for future vengeance. His carriage was brought round to a private door, in a back street; and Ripperda was at last persuaded to enter it. But there was a spy in the house, who informed his enemies of what was done; and before the vehicle, which contained only the Duke and Martini, could pass into the second street towards Segovia, it was met by the howling populace, and surrounded. The windows and doors were quickly beaten in; and Martini, who had hastily covered his livery with one of his master's cloaks, was dragged out, amidst the imprecations of his determined murderers. Ripperda would not tamely witness the sacrifice of

his faithful servant; and with a pistol, with which he had armed himself, shot the man who had seized Martini, through the head. He then snatched the fellow pistol from his belt, and fired it, but without effect, upon the ruffians who threw themselves upon him. He heard Martini groan under his feet, as he himself seemed to grapple with a hundred miscreants, in the last struggles for his life.

But a shield was yet held over the head of Ripperda. The tumult increased in the rear, with the clattering of horses; and, the cries of the mob; as they fled in terror before the gleaming swords of several horsemen, who pressed towards the carriage. Ripperda had already received several flesh wounds, when the stroke of his deliverer's sabre beat down the arm that held the last weapon that was aimed against him; a huge rough hanger, in the hands of a

pardoned galley-slave, — who thus struck at the man whose chief offence was resistance to oppression!

His defenders sufficiently dispersed the mob, to allow their leader to dismount; and advancing to Ripperda, who had extricated himself from the writhing limbs of the wounded wretches beneath him; "Duke," said he, "follow me, and these horsemen shall guard you to safety."

Ripperda, at the same moment, felt a hand on his garment; and, in the next, Martini bruised and bleeding, had drawn himself from under the shattered carriage, whither his enemies had cast him. He raised himself, and stood by the side of his master. The horsemen drew around the group; and galloping before it, made a clear way amongst the flying populace, till they conducted Ripperda to the side of a plain travelling carriage.

Their leader, in a suppressed voice,

requested the fallen statesman to enter it. Suspicion of some refined species of treachery glanced upon his mind. By a feigned rescue, he might be betrayed to an interminable captivity!

"To what asylum would that carriage convey me?" demanded he, in a tone that intimated his doubts.

"To the honour of an open enemy," was the reply; "I am Duke Wharton!"

At this part of Lorenzo's narrative, a cry, unutterable in words, burst from the engloomed but steadfast bosom of his auditor. It was the light breaking upon chaos! Regardless of the presence of the Italian, he fervently clasped his hands together, and inwardly exclaimed: —

"I thank thee, my God, for this!" Then covering his face, he gave way to the balm of tears.

Lorenzo gazed on him with sympathy, and wept also; but it was under a belief that the young Marquis was thus power-

fully affected, by the simple fact of his father's rescue. The amiable page knew not that it was for the rescue of all his future fellowship with man. The sun was again in the heavens to Louis, in the fidelity of Wharton; in the generous revenge he had taken of both son and father.

Strange, inconsistent, noble, erring Wharton! The good was so blended in thee with the ill, that the soul of affection hovered about thy erratic steps, with the watchful tenacity of a guardian angel.

"Oh," cried Louis to himself, "the germs of the tree of life are in that noble, disinterested heart! He has saved my father; and I may weep upon his bosom again!"

The happy agitation of Louis was so great; so pre-eminently did he prize the real character of the beings he loved, before their appendages of fame or power; that it was with an upraised

countenance, and an open eye, he listened to the remainder of Lorenzo's narrative.

Ripperda no longer hesitated to step into the carriage of his preserver. Wharton made the bruised Martini enter also; and accompanying them himself, the voiture set off, escorted by his servants.

The whole party remained silent for some minutes. Ripperda was the first that broke the pause.

"Duke Wharton," said he, "you have at last accomplished your object! The *proudest man in Christendom* has found no friend in his extremest necessity, but you his bitterest enemy! This is not a time in which I can express my sense of the obligation you have laid upon me. You have saved my life; you must now save my honour. One of the treasons alleged against me, is collusion with you. If I seek refuge at your lodgings, I shall confirm the falsehood of my slanderers: and I will perish,

perish by their bullets or their daggers; rather than yield them the advantage of witnessing one of their perjuries, by a dubious action of my own!"

Wharton approved of this caution; and, observing that the Duke's villa at Segovia, would now be as unsafe as his palace at Madrid; he proposed to him the bold measure of proving his sincerity to the house of Brunswick, by throwing himself at once on the protection of General Stanhope, the British Ambassador in Spain. Ripperda saw the advantage of this suggestion; and the carriage was turned towards the residence of this gentleman, which was a mile out of the city, on the road to St. Ildefonso.

On arriving there, the Ambassador was from home; but Ripperda did not hesitate to assume the rights of hospitality at the house of the representative of a sovereign, to whose legal accession to the throne of England, he had obtained the acknowledgement of half Europe.

Wharton went in with his companions. And while some of the servants were gone to arouze the medical attendants of the English Ambassador, to attend on the wounds of his guest, the two Dukes remained in private conference for half an hour. When Wharton withdrew, Martini, who sat in the anti-room, remarked that his countenance was clouded and even stern;—but he smiled when he passed him; and bade him take care of his noble master, for in his fidelity rested the fate of "Cæsar and his fortunes!"

General Stanhope arrived a few hours after the departure of the English Duke, (whose name had not been mentioned in the house;) and was not less surprised than perplexed at finding who had claimed his sanctuary.

The hurts of Ripperda, as well as those of his servant, had been found sufficiently deep, to authorize the surgeons in recommending immediate repose; but the Duke

would not hear of any rest for himself, until he had seen the Ambassador. When Stanhope entered to him, he found his guest lying on a sofa, in a high state of fever, both from his wounds and agitation. Ripperda rose at his appearance, and in the name of honour, and the privileges of his station, claimed his protection from the immediate attack of his political enemies.

What more passed between his master and the Ambassador, Lorenzo could give no account; only, that General Stanhope re-ordered his carriage as soon as he left the chamber of his guest, which was then within an hour of day-break. He set off for Madrid, and did not return till the morning was far advanced. He was then closeted with Ripperda for two hours; and Martini heard the voice of his master very high. However, it appeared, he was to remain unmolested in the house of the Ambassador; though it was immediately surrounded by a Spanish Guard.

The bustle of these proceedings proclaimed the asylum of the Duke; and Lorenzo, who had only arrived that day from the Segovian villa, (when, to his great consternation he found the house at Madrid deserted by the servants, and its bureaus ransacked by the police;) lost no time in seeking his brother and persecuted master, in their reputed sanctuary.

The Duke saw him; and while he walked the room; for the perturbation of his mind, would not permit him to take the repose his wounds demanded; he told him to go instantly to meet his son.

"You will find him," said he, some where between this and Vienna. Describe to him what you have heard and seen. My pen would consume the paper, should I attempt to write my injuries! Tell him, that my life has been assailed by those who now sit in my seat!—Not by their own coward hands:—They

spirit up the rabble to do their bloody work, that they may throw my murder on the indignation of the people! There, however, my fortune baffled them. Now, they insult my protector: they demand his promise, that I shall not escape; and when that is given, they set guards on his house, as if he were a gaoler, and I a prisoner for high-treason! But they venture not to charge it on me: their own infamy is all they dare proclaim; to treat me like the worst of criminals, before I am convicted, before I am accused!——Shew my son, these things; and let him hasten to my support. Tell him, when he is by my side, I will confront them face to face; I will let Spain, and all Europe know, that though honour is banished from the world, it lives and reigns in the bosom of William de Ripperda."

Louis listened to all these details, with various inward emotions; but he was now braced to quell the smallest outward appearance of any. He spoke little in re-

turn; but his step was firm, his eye clear, and his port erect, as he gave his orders at the port of Genoa, for immediate embarkation. A vessel was ready to sail; the wind fair, but boisterous; and under a heavy gale, he launched on the ocean that was to convey him to the land of his forefathers; that was to consign him to the dungeons of Madrid.

CHAP. XIV.

Meanwhile the cabal against the ruined Ripperda raged with redoubled fury in the Spanish cabinet. No appeals from him were suffered to reach His Majesty, while he was accused of every political crime that could criminate a minister; and amongst others, of bribery from the merchants of Ostend; and this, Baptista Orendayn protested on oath, having seen the golden caskets in the hands of his son. Charge after charge was brought forward by the Spaniards. Baron Otho de Routemberg, (a brother of the Austrian minister, and his Ambassador at Madrid) supported them all by a shew of evidence; till, at last, the King was so far persuaded of the attempt at poisoning him having originated with Ripperda,

that he privately summoned a committee of the Council of Castile, and laid the proofs before their judgement.

With equal secrecy they consulted together, and declared it expedient to commit the regicide to some stronger hold than that of the English ambassador's house, till the full council could be assembled, and a solemn trial be made of the offender.

General Stanhope afterwards learnt, that while the new ministers affected great indignation at what they represented as Ripperda's clandestine intelligence with the emissaries of James Stuart, they were severally giving private audiences to Duke Wharton. Philip was entirely in the dark, as to this avenue of their intelligence; for the Duke's presence in Madrid was not generally known, though the Queen herself was more than suspected of having admitted him to a conference in the disguise of a priest. But Stanhope had proof given him, that Whar-

ton passed several hours alone with Grimaldo, on the evening of his rescuing Ripperda from the populace; and that on the night of the sitting of the committee of the Council of Castile, he was seen gliding out of the chamber of the Queen's confessor; who immediately after, went to Her Majesty; and thence carried a message from her to the King, just as he was passing into the cabinet to decide on the judgement that was denounced on Ripperda.

The sentence that was then determined on, and sanctioned by the royal assent, was executed the following morning some hours before the usual time of rising. While all was in profound tranquillity in the city, the Chief Alcaid of the court got into a carriage equipped for travelling, and with a strong escort set forth towards the British residence. A double detachment of soldiers was already there, with orders to support him in case of resistance.

It happened that the house porter had risen before his accustomed time; and supposing, from a stir he heard without, that the usual guard was going to be relieved, he opened the door to amuse himself with the ceremony. The Alcaid and his officers seized the favourable moment, and entered the house without opposition. Some of the soldiers secured the porter from creating an alarm; and the rest filling the hall, fastened the door.

The Alcaid having learnt from the terrified domestic, in what part of the residence the Duke de Ripperda slept, went with his Alquazils, and a military guard, up stairs in the described direction. The tumult they made in hurrying along the passages, awoke General Stanhope; who, hastening out of his room to investigate the cause, met the officer of justice in the lobby. A few words explained his errand; but the brave Englishman would hardly hear it to the end.

He had received the King's word, that the Duke de Ripperda should remain unmolested in his house, until he was demanded to public trial; and he declared, that on the peril of his life, he would resist all illegal procceedings to the contrary.

The Alcaid presented a letter from the Count de Paz, begging His Excellency to read it at least, while he went forward to apprise the ex-minister of the sentence against him. Stanhope, having no other covering than his dressing gown, took the letter, and retired in angry haste, to read it and hurry on his cloaths. Its contents were to this effect; and they were addressed to him.

" That His Majesty, knowing the integrity of the British ambassador, appealed also to his good understanding. His Excellency must be too well acquainted with the Duke de Ripperda's delinquency, not to see the fatal consequences to the royal authority, should

His Majesty bear any longer with the temerity of the Duke, in braving his sovereign with propositions in the language of a prince, rather than of a subject; and all from being in the fancied security of a foreign ambassador's house.

"Such a scandalous example, might hereafter induce some other minister of His Majesty to transgress in a similar way, under the assurance of a similar asylum; and so cover guilt from the royal justice, even within the walls of the royal courts!

"These reflections ought to engage His Excellency to surrender the Duke de Ripperda, on the first summons; and that summons is made in the name of the King, who commands it to be imparted to the British ambassador, that if he insists on the sanctuary of his house, he places the Duke equally out of the reach of His Majesty's mercy, as of his justice. If on a farther impartial inspection of his ministry, it should appear he had not

only betrayed the interests of the state, but had devised the death of the King; when the delinquent was in the power of justice, then His Majesty could either make him a great example in an exemplary punishment; or, what was infinitely more precious in his sight, shew the world as great an example in pardoning so formidable a criminal."

While Stanhope was reading these, and other arguments to persuade, where force was already determined, the Alcaid and his guards approached the door of the Duke's anti-chamber. On opening it rather rudely, (for all now depended on dispatch,) Martini sprang from his mattrass, and seeing the armed men by the dawning light, demanded what they wanted?

"We must speak with your master?" replied their leader.

Martini had now approached them; and recognising the office of the Alcaid by his habit, when he glanced also on

the drawn swords of his attendants, he was at no loss to guess the purpose of their visit; but placing himself before the entrance of the interior chamber, with all the pride of its noble occupier elevating his own manner, he replied:

"My master is not accustomed to intrusion at an hour like this. You must await his commands till noon."

"Seize that fellow," returned the Alcaid, motioning to his men. Two of them obeyed; and Martini was held, pinioned between them, while the Alcaid, followed by the rest, passed direct into the chamber. Since his misfortunes, the Duke's sleep was peculiarly profound, and he now lay in as composed a slumber, as if he slept in his tomb. But the Alcaid, fearing resistance from the Ambassador, should he rejoin them before Ripperda had surrendered himself, darted towards the bed; and drawing back the curtains, roughly awoke the Duke. Ripperda started up in the bed, and beheld

it surrounded by gleaming sabres. Before he could speak, the officer of Justice proclaimed his errand: that he arrested him for high-treason, and came to carry him to the state-prison of Segovia.

"It shall be my corpse!" cried the Duke, snatching a sword from the unprepared hand of the soldier who stood nearest to him, and attempting to rush from the bed.

But the Alcaid had ordered a concerted sign to be made to the men below; and, while those present threw themselves upon the Duke, the other guards hastened up stairs, and filled the chamber. Stanhope came into the room at the same instant, and called loudly on the illegal proceeding; on the breach of his privileges as an ambassador, on the shameful violation of the claims of honour, and the sacred rights of hospitality!

The Duke was now insensible, from

a blow he had received on the temple, in the scuffle. This sight redoubled the indignation, and the threatenings of the brave Englishman; but the Alcaid drew forth his own order, signed by the King, "to take Ripperda, dead or alive;" and then the minister found himself obliged to resist no longer. However, though he stood quiescent while the lifeless Duke was wrapped in the coverlid, and carried to the carriage, he called all around to witness, that he protested against a deed so contrary to the law of nations, and the commonest bonds of faith between man and man.

In passing through the hall, (Martini having been hurried thither by his sentinels,) when the faithful Italian saw his master in so lost a condition, he broke from his guards, and with a dreadful malediction on his murderers, rushed towards him. The soldiers attempted to beat him back; but throwing himself almost upon their swords, his attachment so affected

General Stanhope, that he said to the Alcaid:

"If it be not against your positive orders, let me see, Sir, that you have some regard to humanity, in respecting the fidelity of that man.—Let him accompany his master."

The Alcaid replied, he had no orders, but what related to the person of the Duke; and therefore, to oblige his Excellency, he would permit Martini to attend his Master.

"Not to oblige me;" returned the English minister, "but to lessen the account of outrages I shall immediately charge upon this court to my own! Therefore, on the peril of your safety, pretend to augment that sum, by your own authority alone!"

The Alcaid bowed to Stanhope; and ordered Martini to be placed in the carriage with his master, between a soldier, and an officer of the police. The ve-

hicle then drove off at a rapid gallop, followed by the Alcaid and a grand escort of armed cavalry, towards the dismal Alcazar of Segovia.

CHAP. XV.

Stanhope's indignation was as vehement, as it was sincere, at what had been done; and, to every one of the royal ministers, separately and collectively, he spoke his mind with corresponding boldness. Indeed, his remonstrances were so strong, and what he urged in the Duke's favour, so powerful; that, as it came repeatedly before the King, they began to fear the issue. — Difficulties in substantiating their various allegations against Ripperda, were starting up every hour, and the charge of poisoning, was completely disproved. From all these considerations, they saw the necessity of keeping the ruined minister from any chance of gaining the royal ear; which, they augured, could hardly be prevented,

when his son should arrive; whose high character, notwithstanding the aspersions of his enemies, was whispered about, from the representations of Sinzendorff. Indeed, those who had seen Louis, and knew the foibles of the Queen, were afraid, that should she see him, she might transfer that notice to the son, personal jealousy had alone withdrawn from the father. Impelled by these apprehensions, they moved every engine to convict the Duke of heresy, before Louis could arrive; and in that case, should the Inquisition once claim him as their victim, they knew the bigotry of Philip would abandon his former favourite without another question.

While these machinations were going on at Madrid, Ripperda found the Alcazar at Segovia answer every purpose of his malignant rivals, but that of subduing his spirit. They had placed him in charge of a creature of their own. And though the noble prisoner lay for several days in

such extremity, that for as many nights his faithful servant despaired of his ever seeing the light of another morning, yet no physician was permitted to enter those dismal walls. A dungeon was his chamber; and the coarsest fare, his support. The men, who would not dare to administer poison or strangulation, calculated without remorse on this way of ridding themselves of an obnoxious life. When they thought him sufficiently reduced by sickness and bodily hardships, they put his soul to the torture, by sending a well-tutored priest to extort a confession of his crimes. The demand was backed by an insulting assurance, that, on such a proof of penitence, he should be allowed the indulgence of the state apartments, and the range of the garden for exercise.

Ripperda rejected these insidious proffers, with indignation. Sometimes the language of his Inquisitor provoked him beyond self-controul; and, be-

tween the delirium of illness, and the phrenzy of despair, he, more than once, was left raving, or insensible, in the arms of his servant. As time wore away, and no tidings of Louis or Lorenzo arrived, his enemies took advantage of this circumstance; and on Martini incautiously dropping a hint of the young Marquis's future revenge on the injurers of his father, the priest intimated that Louis was in too good an understanding with his own interests, to unite them again with a discarded traitor, though he were his parent.

This imputation on his son was too much for the small remnant of patience that remained to the Duke. He was now reduced to a maddening state of mental irritation; to an exasperated hatred of human nature; and denouncing Austria and Spain in one wide malediction, he fiercely commanded their agent to leave his presence. The man, however, sat unmoved in soul or in countenance, while

Martini looked with anguish on his master; as on a noble galley he had lately seen proudly stemming its steady way through the raging sea, but now beheld bereft of rudder and compass, and at the mercy of every wind.

The malignant priest waited for a momentary calm, and then threw out some dark hints, that in a few days Ripperda would be removed to a surer durance; and on a double charge of having secretly maintained the principles of heresy in himself; and entrusted the interests of His Catholic Majesty to his son, whom he knew to be a professed heretic. The Duke listened to this in gloomy silence; but when the subtle agent proceeded to say, that this son had offered his evidence to witness the same, Ripperda started from his chair. He now knew no bounds to his wrath; and he proclaimed it in such a manner, that the terrified priest flew before him. Insult and outrage seemed to

have given that bodily vigour to Ripperda, which medicine and surgery had taken no pains to restore.

"Revenge is within me, like a new principle of life!" cried he, to Martini; "I will free myself. And then they shall feel the strength that lies in this single arm!"

Martini learnt from the servants of the prison, that the priest's denunciation was no vain threat; for preparations were silently making for the Duke's removal to the Inquisition, as soon as the King could be brought to sign the warrant. All knew that such a warrant was the signal of death; and of such a death, that human nature shuddered at the bare idea of its horrors. Martini hastened to his master with the intelligence. He found him leaning over a map of the world, which lay on the table before him. Ripperda attended to all he said, with profound attention. When he had finished speaking, he commanded him to with-

draw for an hour; after which time, he would tell him his resolution.

It was two hours, before the Duke called him in from the anti-chamber, which was his usual station as his master's guard; and then he calmly told him that it was his determination to effect his own escape, and to take his revenge from the pillars of Hercules. As he spoke, he pointed with his finger to the spot on the map which marked the Rock of Gibraltar. Martini readily came into all his master's plans; and gladly heard him discuss them, with all his former sobriety of manner, and decision of command.

"But," asked the faithful servant, "should the Marquis visit this prison when we are gone, how is he to know where to follow you?"

"My actions shall proclaim to him and to the world where to follow me!' replied the Duke; "If he be the parricide these people represent, he will then repent the poor part he has now

taken; and see the policy, if not the duty, of being true to the fortunes of such a father. But, if these wretches have slandered him, and he be indeed my son, — then I will make that England, which fostered him, what I would have made this ungrateful, ruined country!"

Martini saw that a temporary mist clouded the mind of his master; but that noble nature had been so smitten by universal ingratitude, he did not wonder it should doubt every dubious appearance. He, however, had seen enough of Louis, to admire and to love him; and he zealously exerted himself to overthrow the suspicions against him which occasionally arose in the mind of his father. Something influenced by his reasoning, Ripperda employed the greatest part of the day in writing a large packet for his son. He inclosed it under a cover to the Marquis Santa Cruz, who had a villa in the neighbourhood. Martini delivered it the same

night into the hands of the Marchioness, her husband being still in Sardinia; but she assured the faithful servant of her care of its contents.

Ripperda's attention was next directed to put his plan of escape, in train for execution. It was modelled by the difficult situation of the Alcazar. This state prison stands on the summit of a huge rock, overlooking the city of Segovia on one side; and on the other, which is nearly perpendicular, and covered with matted underwood to a thickness almost impenetrable, it precipitates down to a fosse, filled from the river Atayada. The castle was erected by the Moors; and is fortified according to their ancient mode. The large old square towers are bound round their battlements with a heavy stone-work of chains, proclaiming from afar the subjection in which the Moresco princes formerly held the Spanish land. This once formidable fortress,

like their banished race, was, in many parts, in a state of decay; and, in others, totally destroyed. Some of the buttresses were mouldering away; and, where one of the towers had fallen, its ruins dammed up part of the ditch; at least it raised a causeway under the water, so high that a person acquainted with its direction, might pass over very safely, knee-deep in the stream.

In a dungeon of the corresponding tower, on this side of the castle, was the prison of Ripperda.

Martini prepared a couple of stout mules, and concealed them amongst the thickets on the opposite side of the fosse. In that part, it was little better than a morass, from the occasional overflowing of the waters at the rainy seasons. He also procured the habits of muleteers, for the Duke and himself; and a ladder of ropes, to descend from the window of the prison to the top of the rock; whence

they were to scramble their way down its declivity to the edge of the ditch.

Every thing was prepared for the momentous attempt; but on the very morning of the day fixed on for the escape, Ripperda was visited by a Jesuit of rank; who came on a special commission from the Marquis de Paz, to apprize him that the King had signed his warrant for the Inquisition; and to mock him with the assurance, that nothing could now save him from the extremest vengeance of the offended church, but a full acknowledgement of all his heretical and political iniquities. The gracious message then was, that in such a case he should be represented to the Pope, and possibly might be pardoned.

The Jesuit expatiated on the curse of heaven, which now manifested itself on the head of the Duke in every relation of his life. Whether in its public or private circumstances, all bore the marks of universal

excommunication. His son had deserted him; and the fortunes on which he leaned as on a rock, were now sinking in the ocean; or becoming the prey of corsairs, to swell the iniquity of infidels like himself. All this circumlocution only informed Ripperda of a misfortune, unworthy his attention at the present moment: the loss of his Levant merchantmen; part, in the late heavy storms; and part, taken by the pirates of Barbary.

To impose upon this new emissary, he had received him, lying on his bed, where he affected to have sustained a relapse of his illness; and, during the whole discourse kept a stern silence. At last, being vehemently urged for some reply to the proposition respecting a penitential appeal to the Pope, Ripperda raised himself on his arm; and with eyes glaring on his visitor, like the roused lion from his lair, he fiercely replied:—

"Tell your employers, that before

they again lay hands on the Duke de Ripperda, he will have made his appeal to a tribunal which shall make them tremble! And for your arguments! I too, studied in the Jesuits' college, and am not to be ensnared!"

The priest supposed the infuriated Duke anticipated his own death, and meant the tribunal of heaven; and shaking his head, while he pronounced the words "reprobate!" and "accursed!" he left the apartment.

Martini urged that nothing should delay their departure that night; for, after the information which the Jesuit brought, he saw the approach of *a Familiar* in every shadow that flitted across the dungeon wall.

Ripperda sat a long time, absorbed in thought. He heard no word of Martini's; he saw nothing of his busy arrangements for their flight. The corsairs of Barbary, his own Moorish ancestors, and the banishment of part of their race,

while his own line remained great lords in Spain; were all before his mind's eye, in fearful, prompting apparition. His warlike progenitor, Don Valor de Ripperda, two hundred years ago, had married the only daughter of the Moresco King of Granada.

His son, the renowned Don Ferdinand de Valor shook the Christian kingdoms of Spain to their centre, when the dark policy of Philip II. issued his edict to expel the Moorish descendants from their ancient seats in Spain. Aben-Humeya was the name of the Granada princes. De Valor resumed it, when he raised the rebel standard on the Alpuxara mountains.

"Another Philip shall hear that name again!" cried Ripperda to himself; and covering his face with his hands, to prevent any outward circumstance disturbing the current of his meditations, he sat without word or motion, till the dungeon became wrapped

in total darkness, and the hour of his attempt drew near.

Martini had furnished himself with gold from his master's villa in the neighbourhood; which he had visited secretly by the Duke's directions, through ways known only to himself; and to a treasury under ground, which had escaped the scrutiny of the police, and was abundant in jewels and ingots. The wealth, which Ripperda deemed necessary for his expedition, was sewed into various parts of their muleteer garments. Martini appeared from his little anti-room, with a lamp in his hand, as the prison clock struck ten. It was a rough autumnal night; a bright moon, at times shewed her head through the flying clouds; and at others was totally obscured under a mass of billowy vapours, rolling over each other, and descending till they touched the hills.

The goaler had locked his prisoners in, and retired to rest. The sentinels were

planted at their posts; each on the ramparts of the curtain that ran between the towers. Ripperda roused himself from his portentous trance, and arrayed his noble figure in the rugged habiliments of the muleteer. In vain he dyed his visage with the bista-nut; in vain he shrouded himself in the leathern jerkin, unshapely boots, and huge Sierra-bonnet; still the grandeur of his air, and the grace of his person, proclaimed the descendant of princes; and he who was used to command, and be obeyed.

The light Italian looked what he assumed; a brisk, active muleteer, full of life and merriment.

Their belts were filled with loaded pistols, which they covered from observation by the fringes of their vests; a poniard was in each well-guarded bosom; and a trusty sword by their sides. Being fully equipped, Ripperda looked around him on the walls of his dungeon. It was still in the verge of possibility that

his son might seek his father in that dismal chamber. He paused; and hastily wrote a few lines, to say that parent still lived, and would yet proclaim himself with honour to the world. He directed the brief letter to the Marquis de Montemar, and left it on the table.

Martini threw up his hooked-rope; which catching on the iron stanchel of the window, he drew himself by it to the top, and dislodged the bars from their slight holding. A few days before, he had filed away their firm adhesion to their sockets. Having made open way for his master, he fastened the rope-ladder to the opposite side of the window, and dropping it out, slid down its sides till he reached the bottom. Here he drove its spiked extremity into the earth. By that time the Duke had mounted by the same means to the window; and drawing up the rope by which he had ascended, remained seated on the stone casement, till Martini

had fixed all right below. It was no sooner accomplished, than Ripperda was on the top of the ladder, and in a few seconds by his side.

The sentinel was singing a sequedilla above; and its notes came to them with the wailing blast. The moon was now full upon them, and Martini putting out his head a little from the wall distinctly saw the musket and waving feather of the soldier as he walked to and fro at his post. Their garments, however, were dark; and they moved cautiously along amongst the bushes at the bottom of the curtain, till they reached the ruined tower whose fallen masses lessened the perpendicular of the descent. Like the rest, it was covered with thicket; and they clambered down from bush to bush and projecting roots of trees now no more, till they arrived at the brink of the fosse.

Martini had tried the ford the night before; and plunging in, which example

Ripperda followed, both found a firm footing in the water. They crossed in safety; and Martini, taking up a fragment of the ruin, rolled the Duke's sumptuous garments round it, and also his own, and sunk it in the ditch. This was to prevent the suspicion of their having changed their usual dresses, when they fled. Martini then turned aside to seek the mules. The moon again shone out from the black clouds.

"Fortune favours me!" cried Ripperda, as he looked up to her bright orb, and to the frowning battlements he had left. "Thy ensign may light me back to this castle in a different garb from that in which I leave it! When Spain sees me again, it will not be as a benefactor."

He turned into the thickets to follow Martini, and was soon lost in the darkness.

CHAP. XVI.

The second night after Louis had left the port of Genoa, the vessel which contained him was blown to sea by the severity of the weather; and drove about, contending with the tempest, far from the coasts of Spain, for one and twenty days. Each succeeding day seemed an age, to the heart of a son, impatient to console and cheer a suffering parent under his undeserved misfortunes; and sleep seldom closed those vigilant eyes that were ever watchful for a change in the wind; or for some repose in the turbulent element, which bore him along with unstemmable fury from the shores he sought.

Again and again he questioned Lorenzo on every particular of what had

occurred, propitious or adverse, during his father's administration; and on what befel him after his most atrocious overthrow. Sometimes his anxiety to join him became so uncontroulable, he was ready to throw himself into the waves, to breast their torrent towards the Spanish shores; at other times, he called upon himself to endure the hard trial Providence had laid upon his filial patience; and to await its good time of bringing him to the side of his father.

At last the storms changed their direction; and though equally boisterous, blew the little vessel with velocity towards the Balearic Isles. To persist in stretching for Barcelona would have been madness in such desperate weather; the commander, therefore, determined to make the nearest Spanish port. As the ship approached the coast, and Louis for the first time beheld that land, which had so long been the bourn of all his wishes; first, as the theatre of

his father's fame, and the stage where himself was to contend for the same deathless prize! then as the spot that contained that father, stripped of every outward honour, and excluded from all hope, but in the dutiful devotedness of his son! He gazed on it in a strange tumult of mind. It was the land of his forefathers; and with what views, with what feelings, was he first to set his foot upon its shores!

Its high and abrupt outline cut the horizon between sea and sky, like a superb citadel of mountains, guarding its rich Hesperian vales. When he saw the golden clouds rolling from the sides of those stupendous natural bulwarks, as the descending car of day plunged into the refulgent main, he thought of his father's setting sun; of his last beams gilding the country he loved; of that fair country, opening before himself, as he had anticipated, luminous in glory, like the unfolding gates of

paradise! But even while he gazed, and mused, and felt a pleased augury in the splendid show, the golden hues faded from the ethereal amphitheatre; the clouds, darkening in their shapes, collected around the headlands; and in grey and sombrous masses rested on their tops, till a fierce and eddying wind from the south-east, dispersed them in one wide and obscuring mist over the whole scene. Louis drew a deep sigh, and turned from the side of the vessel.

Next morning it anchored in the bay of Valencia. The business of disembarking and of resuming his journey by land, direct to Madrid, prevented all particular reflection, till he got into the carriage. Lorenzo deemed it prudent not to say, at any of the post-houses, or towns he passed through, who was his companion; and, though Louis felt he was stealing into the country of his ancestors like a stranger and a spy; yet, by this discretion, they travelled rapidly

towards the capital of Castile, without any unusual impediment, or even the knowledge that Ripperda had been removed from the protection of the British ambassador.

Whether he were passing over plain or mountain, cultivated fields, or barren tracts, all were the same to Louis, while his eye was fixed alone on the one object of his journey. He entered the barriers of Madrid at midnight; but nothing could prevent him driving immediately through the city and the northern gate, to the British residence.

When the carriage drew up to the portico, another had just driven away; and through the yet open door, Lorenzo saw the Ambassador passing through the hall. In a moment he was out of the carriage, and Louis followed him. The porter was asked by Lorenzo, to conduct the Marquis de Montemar to his Excellency. General Stanhope had just entered his saloon when Louis was announced. Stan-

hope started at the name, knowing it was that of the son of Ripperda. Louis approached him; his hat was in his hand; and with hardly articulate accents, instead of what he meant to say, he could only utter the agitated words—

"My father ——"

That countenance could never be once looked upon by an unprejudiced eye, without making an immediate interest in the heart. Though now worn and pallid, Stanhope felt its power. He saw all the son in its haggard lines; he heard all the son, in those few indistinct sounds.

"You expect to find your father, here, Sir?" replied the General.

By the manner of this question, Louis apprehended something of what had happened, and with inexpressible alarm, he he replied:

"And where is my father?"

"To the eternal disgrace of the cabinet

of Spain," returned the minister, "its orders violated the sanctuary of my house; and by an outrageous execution of a most unjust decree, tore him from his bed, and immured him in the Alcazar of Segovia!"—

Louis did not stagger under the shock of this intelligence; he firmly replied;

"I am to understand from this, he is in prison?—On what pretence?"

"Treason against the state," returned Stanhope; "but they cannot make their charges good. Visible facts outweigh false swearing; and though Duke Wharton has been their counsellor night and day, nothing can be proved against your father, but that he once was a heretic, and that you are the same."

"Duke Wharton?" repeated Louis.

"Yes;" rejoined the ambassador, "he made a shew of rescuing the Duke de Ripperda from the fury of the populace; but it was only to betray him to the ministry. He left him in my house, and

then drove to Grimaldo, to tell him where to find him."

Louis sunk into a seat; and remained, with his hands locked, and his teeth fixed in aiguish death-like coldness, while the ambassador continued his account of the affair.

He assured his agonized auditor, that notwithstanding the circumspection of the present ministers, to conceal their correspondence with the English Duke, he had ascertained the fact of its having preceded the fall of Ripperda several months; and that it was Wharton's task to draw Ripperda into all the situations, which had been wrested to his disadvantage. In consequence of such manœuvres, it was represented to the King, that Ripperda had privately conferred with Wharton in a pass of the Carinthian mountains; and that at some other place, an affair of secrecy was discussed between them, at which Richelieu the French ambassador

was present. These things were told to Stanhope by an authority he could not dispute, but must not mention; and the same informant added, that whatever were the objects Ripperda coalesced in with Wharton, the cause of James Stuart was not one; for, it was in resentment of Ripperda's refusing to embrace his views there, that Wharton betrayed his correspondence with the Duke, and alleged against him treasons of other, and terrible tendencies.

Stanhope observed, that from some of the present ministers being secretly inclined to the Stuart cause, he well understood why Duke Wharton had abandoned all bonds of honour to maintain them in their seats. But could he have found any signs of a changing principle in Ripperda, it was not to be doubted that he would have preferred a single auxiliary of such mental strength, to any combination of more feeble powers. Before Stanhope thought proper to repeat to the fallen minister, what

had been confided to him respecting his pretended deliverer; Ripperda had spoken of Wharton's conduct in his rescue, as a deed of generosity that left him no words in which to express his admiration. Stanhope then disclosed the relation of his secret informant; and ended with denominating the alleged previous meetings, as either falsehoods of his enemies, or, the confession of them, an unexampled instance of perfidy in the English Duke. Ripperda, at first listened incredulously to the charges against his deliverer; but when the rencounter amongst the Carinthian mountains was mentioned, and some other corroborating circumstances followed that disclosure, the Duke abruptly exclaimed,

"It is all perfidy, for the facts are true!"

At this part of the narrative, Louis turned his powerful eyes upon the ambassador. Stanhope thought he read their suspicions.

" Hear me to an end," continued he,

"and you will find the whole perfidy belongs to the Duke of Wharton."

Louis dropped his heavy eye-lids over those scathed eyes, which he would have been glad to have closed in death; and bowed without a word. General Stanhope then repeated to him, all that the impassioned resentment of Ripperda had excited him to avow. He declared his ancient and inexorable hatred of Wharton and his politics; he boasted that the transaction to which the Duke de Richelieu was privy, had been one of mutual vengeance; that he quarrelled with Wharton at the Cardinal's table, and the same night took his revenge with the sword.

Louis put his hand upon his burning forehead.

"I failed of reaching his heart," said Ripperda, "but my sword went so near it, we believed him slain. He was taken up for dead; and Richelieu and the Cardinal conjured me to hush the affair. I obliged them; and heard no more of

him, till like my evil genius, he appeared in the very mountains he speaks of; and under the darkness of night, returned to me the dispatches, which, I doubt not, his own emissaries had taken from my courier. I did not know it was him till several hours after his departure. The mantle the supposed outlaw had worn, was then brought to me; and I recognized it to be that of the Cardinal, in which I saw him wrap the senseless body. His blood was on it.—Stanhope, we were enemies!—always mortal enemies. Think then, what must have been the revulsion in my breast, when he I had assailed to such extremity, rescued me from the murderous rabble, and brought me to the unquestionable refuge of your house!"

Stanhope subscribed to the reasonableness of the Duke's first impressions, as the immediate effect of such supposed generosity. But since it was proved that Wharton was actuated by the reverse of

a generous motive; that he had busied himself in the secret counsels of Ripperda's public enemies; and had gained the ear of the Queen, so far as to influence the rejection of every letter from her once prime favourite: and not satisfied with these treacheries, had even had recourse to representing circumstances which contained no offence in themselves, under colours so invidious, as to wear whatever treasonable shape he chose they should assume.

"What," asked Stanhope of the Duke de Ripperda, "what are you to think of such a man?"

"As the most accomplished villain that ever disgraced the name of man," cried the Duke.

And then, without further hesitation, he opened out the whole of Wharton's converse with him, during the half hour they were alone together in the British residence. It was to urge him to revenge himself on his implacable foes in

Spain and Austria, by immediately embracing the Bavarian and Stuart claims. He argued, that should he take this step, France and Prussia, three parts of Germany, and all Italy, would contend for his guiding hand.

"In short, his persuasions were such," added Stanhope, "that your father owned to me, did he not connect honour with revenge, he would have been tempted to accept his offers; but, he said, he had determined to die as he had lived, by his principles; and he rejected all. The consequence was, the disappointed emissary of these double treasons, immediately accused him of his own crimes. And, that he might never meet a second chastisement from the man he had betrayed, it was he that urged Grimaldo to hold your father in perpetual imprisonment."

The substance of Wharton's proffers to his father were so like those he had made to himself; and their rejection having been followed up by the very con-

duct he had threatened in the chateau garden, — "Ripperda and de Montemar shall find what it is to have Wharton for an enemy!" Louis could not doubt this treacherous vengeance being a fact; and crying within his soul, against him who had perpetrated so black a revenge, he started from his seat. The expression of his face was terrific; the image of sweet humanity seemed blotted from it; and with a burning eye, and a complexion of death, he turned from Stanhope; and totally forgetful of his presence, took a pistol from his belt.

The Englishman grasped his arm.

"Marquis, what do you intend?"

Louis scarcely moved his head as he replied: —

"To seek Duke Wharton."

Stanhope laid his hand gently, but firmly on the pistol.

"Give me this useless weapon," said he, "the treacherous Duke is already hidden from your vengeance. He passed

last night in private conference with the triumvirate; and this morning, at day-break, he left Madrid, but in what direction he is gone, no one can guess."

Louis yielded his pistol to the demand of Stanhope, relaxing his fingers from the iron grasp in which he held it, and trembling from head to foot, he leaned on the sympathising representative of his maternal country. At that moment the crime and inefficacy of bloodshed, in avenging injuries like his, or any injuries, struck upon his soul. The venerable form of Mr. Athelstone appeared before him, and turning from the supporting arm of General Stanhope, he buried his face in his hands, and stood immoveable, lost in the multitude and agonies of his thoughts.

The ambassador left him to recover alone. When he re-entered he found him walking up and down the room, with a composed step. Louis advanced to his friendly host.

"Will you pardon all that you have just seen of my weakness, and assist me to join my father instantly?"

Anticipating this request, during his absence Stanhope had dispatched two messengers to the Count de Grimaldo, (who he knew was not yet gone from council, though the hour was so late,) to obtain an order to the warden of the Alcazar at Segovia, for the admission of the Marquis de Montemar to the imprisoned Duke. To the first messenger the Count gave a civil refusal; adding, that such permission would be a dangerous instance of indulgence to so signal a criminal as the Duke de Ripperda; and the enterprizing spirit of the son might be feared. Stanhope sent his secretary back, with a strong remonstrance against the justice of this refusal; adding, that should it be repeated, he must consider the act as a personal insult to himself: it was hostile to every principle of an Englishman; and, he had hoped, to every princi-

ple in civilized man. "In England, (said he) law and equity war against crime, not against nature. There, the criminal, under sentence of death for the worst offences, is suffered to see those near and dear to him. Humanity must bench with justice; or punishment itself becomes crime, and degenerates into revenge. The Marquis de Montemar, though he bear a Spanish title, has had a British education. He may be willing to avenge himself of his father's enemies; but as neither plot nor treachery are taught in a British school, trust his father's captivity to his honour, and you cannot hold him in stronger bonds."

The Spanish minister did not deem it politic to repulse a second request from the English Ambassador on such a subject, and with a polite excuse for his former refusal, he dispatched the signed order for the admission of Ripperda's son.

In the course of half an hour Louis

was re-seated in his travelling carriage, with four fresh horses, furnished from General Stanhope's stables; and accompanied by Lorenzo, (having left his servants at the ambassador's,) he set forward to Segovia.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER XVII.

The sun had risen, when the equipage that contained Louis de Montemar, ascended the mountainous heights of the Guadarama. From a rocky valley, diverging down to the eastern horizon, and shaded with every umbrageous tree and shrub of that luxuriant climate, a distant view of the Escurial was visible. The rays of the ascending sun were bright upon it: and the superb palace of the Spanish kings shone in its fullest splendour.

Lorenzo looked round on Louis. His countenance was still the same as when he entered the carriage; and the page did not venture to call his attention to the magnificent view before him. League after league was traversed. St. Ilde-

fonso's gilded pinnacles next presented themselves on the declivity of a beautiful hill. Its fountains and its ambrosial vistas rivalled those of Versailles; in emulation of whose regal elegancies, the grandson of Louis XIV. had caused it to be erected. But here, again, Lorenzo was silent; and glittering domes, and sparkling fountains, lowly cottages, and gliding rivulets; all were alike passed, by the abstracted eye of Louis, without note or cognizance.

The chesnut woods of Antero de Herrares opened their enamelled glades before the travellers. They crossed a marble bridge, whose pillared arches and light ballustrades clasped the broadest arm of the river Atayada, which here flowed in a deep and pellucid stream. A little onward was a range of Ionic colonades of the same spotless material, diverging on each side from a triple gate of gilded iron-work surmounted by arches, whose classic architraves were

wrought in Italy. A golden eagle, the armorial ensign of the Ripperda family, crested the centre arch. Within were the park and the deer, and the mansion rearing its brilliant columns amidst the redundant groves of a Spanish autumn. The orange, the citron, and the pomegranate, formed the luxuriant avenue; and where fruit bloomed on the branches, the fragrance of the blossom mingled with the breath of the countless flowers beneath, and filled the air with perfume.

The same feeling which had chained the tongue of Lorenzo, while passing indifferent objects, however note-worthy, now precipitated him to speak, and he exclaimed:

"Here, my Lord, is the Duke's Segovian villa!—all the windows are shut up; and not a soul stirring, where we were once so many, and so gay!"

Louis glanced on what might have been his home; and the flying horses

shot by those splendid gates, to find their owner in a prison! He did not answer Lorenzo, not even with a sigh; but looked steadily forward, till the dark towers of the Alcazar appeared over the intervening woods. He read their name, in their blackness and their chains; but he neither groaned nor shut his eyes on the dismal abode to which his father was transferred.

After ascending a long and winding road, they passed through the oldest quarter of the town of Segovia, still upon an ascent, till, on crossing the rattling timbers of a draw-bridge, the carriage stopped beneath a massy archway. Several sentinels drew around the vehicle, with demands whence it came, and what was the object of the persons it contained. Lorenzo, being most ready in the language of the questions, abruptly answered:

"We bear an order from the Count Grimaldo to the warden of the Alca-

zar, for admittance to the Duke de Ripperda."

An officer from the warden appeared, to receive and examine the passport. Louis alighted, and presented the order. The deputy bowed respectfully, when he read the name of the Marquis de Montemar, and requested him to follow him "to the prison of the Duke."

"The prison of my father!" said he to himself.

"But what is in the sound of a word, when the fact is already present."

With unbreathing silence, and a heart into which all that was man within him was summoned, he followed his conductor. They reached a heavy door, studded with iron, and traversed with massy bars. The deputy drew a huge key from his breast, and opened it.

As it grated horribly in the guards of the lock, and the damp and dreariness of the passages struck on the shuddering

senses of Lorenzo, the affectionate youth exclaimed:

"Oh, my honoured Lord! Is it in such a place I find you!"

Louis turned at the exclamation, and looked on the faithful servant; but no tear was in his eye, no sound on his lip.

The door was opened; and the deputy stood back, while the son of the Duke entered the vestibule of the prison. The unoccupied pallet of Martini lay in one corner of this miserable anti-room. Louis saw nothing but the door that led to the interior apartment; and passing through the vestibule with one step, though with an awful sense of his father's fallen dignity, and of the dignity whose affliction even a son must not break on too abruptly; he gently pushed forward the half-open door, and found himself in a large and dripping dungeon. He started, and gazed around; for all was horrible, but all was solitude.

"Where is my father?"

"In his bed," cried the deputy, who now entered, "He is ill."

Louis hastily, but with a light tread, passed across the pavement to the mattrass, which lay behind a woollen curtain in a low vaulted part of the cell. The officer, with less delicacy of attention to the supposed slumbers of an invalid, followed him. Lorenzo glided in also; and at the very moment in which the deputy had pressed before Louis, to announce to the sleeping Ripperda, the arrival of his son, the page's eye fell on a letter which lay on the table. In the instant the officer's appalled ejaculation proclaimed that no Duke was in the bed, Lorenzo saw it was directed to the Marquis de Montemar, and snatching it up, put it in his breast.

"Then, where is he?" exclaimed Louis, throwing himself between the door and the deputy, who was hastily moving towards it; "You pass not here,

till you tell me, to what deeper dungeon you have removed him; for no power on earth shall keep me from my father."

The man stood still, and the consternation in his countenance, more than his asseverations of total ignorance on the subject, convinced Louis that whatever was become of his father, this person was innocent of his fate. He therefore demanded to see the warden, declaring, while he insisted on his demand, that the order he had presented, was from the minister to admit him to the Duke whereever he might be; and on the authority of that order, he would force his way to his presence against every opposition.

The officer affirmed, that the warden could know nothing of the Duke's strange absence; for that he, the deputy, had himself secured the doors on the prisoner and his servant the preceding night; and no one else, not even the warden, possessed a duplicate key to that dungeon.

While he continued to speak with vehemence, and in manifest terror of punishment for what had happened, the determined son of Ripperda repeated his demands to have the warden summoned; for he would not leave the spot till he was convinced that both officers were ignorant of the cause of his father's disappearance.

The deputy being now suffered to go to the dungeon door, called a sentinel from the end of the stone gallery, and briefly told the man to remain with the Marquis till he should return. But as he withdrew, he had the precaution to turn the key of the dungeon on those it contained.

The sentinel stood with fixed arms where his employer had left him, and Lorenzo glided silently round the dismal apartment, prying into every thing. Having found the letter, (which he yet kept carefully concealed, till he could safely shew it to his master,) he thought

he might possibly discover some other memorandum from Martini to himself; and, not doubting that the Duke and his brother had made their escape, he left no nook or crevice unexplored.

Louis remained seated against the table, with his arms folded, and gazing intently on the open window. But it was the gaze of concentrated thought, not of observation. Indeed it could hardly have seemed possible to him, that the Duke could have withdrawn himself through that aperture. It was not only eighteen feet above the bottom of the dungeon, but from the shadows in the depth of the wall, appeared a mere crenille, too narrow for any man to pass through. These objections would have occurred to Louis, against the supposition of this having been the way of his father's escape; had the idea of an escape once presented itself to his mind. But he repelled the first intimation from the deputy of such a suspicion.

"From what," said he, "should my father fly? Justice must speak at last, and acquit him with honour!"

In his own person, he felt that he would sooner be condemned in the face of day by an iniquitous sentence, than incur the stigma of conscious guilt by flying from the trial it was his right to demand.

"No," cried he, "the Duke de Ripperda would not so desert himself!"

While he believed this, his heart died within him at the thought of his father's endless captivity in some remote prison, where he might never hear the voice of consolation, or see the face of a comforter; and then the spectre of midnight murder suddenly presented itself. His eye hastily scanned the flinty pavement, but there were no traces of blood; all was clear, and all was orderly in the wretched apartment, without any traces of struggle.

In the midst of these reflections, the throng of hurry and alarm was heard in

the gallery, the great key once more turned in its guards; and the hinges grating roughly as the door was pushed open, a crowd of soldiers, preceded by the warden and the deputy, poured into the dungeon.

Louis stood to receive them. The warden, holding the order of the Marquis de Montemar's admittance in his hand, in the disorder of his consternation hastily advanced to him and exclaimed,

" Marquis, where is the Duke, your father?"

" That is my demand of you," replied Louis, pointing to the order; " the Count Grimaldo expected I should find him here. Here he is not. And you are answerable for his safety, and his appearance."

In glancing round the dungeon, from the floor to the cieling, the warden's eye was quicker than the deputy's; and without attending to the reply of Louis, he exclaimed,

"He has escaped through the window!"

"Impossible!" cried the deputy, "he could not reach it."

"Who reached it to take out the bars?" returned his superior, "he is gone, and by that way. Round, soldiers, to the ditch!"

Louis stood in wordless astonishment at this confirmation of what he too had thought impossible, though the impossibility to him had rested on the mind of the Duke, not on the means of escape: but when he saw the men withdraw with fixed bayonets, to hunt his father's life, (for he knew his resolution too well to believe, that after having once chosen the alternative of flight, he would submit to be re-taken;) all his father's danger rushed upon him; and conscious to no other impulse than that of defending him, he turned impetuously to throw himself before the soldiers.

The warden saw the movement, and

guessed the intention. He was a man of gigantic muscle, and seizing the arm of Louis, called aloud to bar the egress.

"What violence is this?" demanded Louis, forcibly extricating himself and rushing towards the door. But the sentinel without had thrust the bolt into its guard.

"You must be my prisoner, Marquis," returned the warden, "until those men have searched the neighbourhood.

"On your peril!" exclaimed Louis; "I demand to be released!—In the name of your sovereign, and of your laws, I demand it!—You have no right to imprison an unoffending man, who came hither under the safe conduct of your minister's signet."

As he spoke, he heard the report of a carbine; and desperate with apprehension for his father, he snatched his only remaining pistol from his belt. "Open that door, warden," cried he, "or

I will make a passage through your heart!"

The wary Spaniard did not stop to answer, but striking aside the arm that held the pistol, it went off; and the ball lodged in the opposite wall. Louis then felt for his sword. His athletic opponent was on the watch; and seizing him round the body,

"Marquis," cried he, "these outrages can only undo yourself. If the Duke de Ripperda be found, he must be taken alive, at the risk of those who seek him. Kill me, and you are no less a prisoner; for the door is fastened, beyond your strength to burst."

Louis was alone with this powerful man; for Lorenzo, with the same intentions as his master, had rushed out with the soldiers. While he stood, apparently quiescent, in the clutch of his adversary, he still held his hand on his sword. He discredited the pledge for Ripperda's safety, and resolutely replied.

"If my father have fallen, there shall be life for life!"

And, with the word, he suddenly wrenched himself from the warden's grasp, and as suddenly drawing out his sword, stood with his back against the door.—"I am here, till I know the issue of this search; but I am not, a second time to be disarmed. Repeat to the sentinel without, your command respecting my father's safety; and demand of him, the cause of the firing of that carbine!"

The warden had no weapons, but his bodily strength; and finding that the nerve of his young antagonist, when braced by despair, was equal to his own; and seeing that desperation was in his eyes, and a sword in his hand; he thought it prudent to comply; and he called to the sentinel to dispatch a man round with the demands of the Marquis.

Never, since the hour of his birth, did Louis find himself in so terrible a situation.

He was hearkening to the distant voices of them, he believed were his father's murderers, and he found it impossible to get to his rescue! He was, himself, acting the part of a man of violence, to one who was only performing his hard, but cruel duty! As he stood, gloomily lost in the horror of the moment, another carbine was fired, accompanied by shouts from the soldiers. He thought he heard a groan follow the report, and that it issued from below the window.

Without a word, or almost a thought, he threw his sword from him, and springing on the opposite wall, found that he had not climbed the perpendicular cliffs of Lindisfarne in vain. The stones were rough; and giving short but sufficient hold to his hand and foot, he gained the deep recess of the window before he scarcely knew he had left the ground. The act seemed but one spring, to the amazed warden. Louis had no sooner reached the window, than he would have

thrown himself from the flinty butments upon the top of the precipice. Happily the voice of Lorenzo, from the rock beneath, arrested him.

To descend on this side, by clambering, was impossible; the outer part of the wall being worn inward in great and abrupt hollows, till that part of the tower where the window was excavated, hung over the rock in a shelving state.

"The Duke cannot be found!" cried Lorenzo. — "For his sake, and for God's do not attempt quitting the dungeon by that window! The soldiers have just shot away this rope-ladder, by which he must have escaped."

While he spoke, he lifted it from the ground. The soldiers had spied it at a distance, hanging loose from the wall; and as they scrambled through the matted brambles towards the point, one of them took aim, and it fell. Lorenzo, had made his approach, before; to see what farther evidence of Ripperda's flight

might be found there; and while the echoes rang with the men's shouts, at so poor an achievement; he fortunately saved Louis further danger, by shewing him the trophy,

"But another carbine was fired?" demanded Louis.

"A soldier slipped his foot, and his piece went off," replied Lorenzo. "Discard me, kill me; but believe me true!" cried the page, aware of his master's surmises, and seeing his hand ready to leave its grasp; "quit that perilous place, I conjure you. The pursuers are gone round, to say the Duke has escaped beyond their recovery!"

Louis was satisfied; and turning towards the dungeon, the entering soldiers doubly assured him; and dropping from the window, inward, he sprung upon the floor.

The men gave a hurried account of their fruitless search.

"Marquis," said the warden, "you

must excuse me, that I do not restore a sword which has menaced an officer of the crown; but the door is open, and you may now pass hence. My employers will properly notice the violence of the son, when they have information of the flight of the father."

"Sir," returned Louis, "if I have injured you, in my struggles for the liberty that was my right, I regret it; and if you know either a father's or a son's heart, you will not reject my apology."

"Soldiers, attend the Marquis de Montemar to the gates," coldly replied the warden.

Louis doubted. He might yet be deceived. He knew not where to seek his father. The enlargement that was now offered him, re-awakened his suspicions; and without noticing the order of the warden, he stood still. Lorenzo was more present to himself. He had entered with a second groupe of soldiers; and putting his hand gently on his mas-

ter's arm, almost unconsciously drew him out of the dungeon. On the threshold, he whispered:—

"If you are to succour the Duke, we must not linger here!"

The words were a talisman on the benumbed faculties of Louis; he hastened forward, and threw himself into the carriage.

"Back to the British ambassador's," cried Lorenzo to the postilions. The rapid vehicle once more passed over the draw-bridge and wheeled down the declivity through the town. On a rising knoll, Louis caught another glimpse of the dismal towers in which he had endured such variety of mental agony, in the course of so few hours! He drew his eyes from them, and the carriage plunged into the long avenue of aloes which led to the wooded heights of Antero de Herrares.

Lorenzo pulled up the windows, and let drop the silken blinds. He then put

one hand in his bosom, and laid the other on his master's arm.

"My dear Lord," cried he, "here is a letter from your father!"

Louis started; "Lorenzo?" and snatched the letter that was held to him. It was his father's hand-writing on the address! While he tore open the seal, Lorenzo told him where he had found it. It was not necessary to explain why he had concealed it until this moment. Louis read as follows:—

"If my son have not abandoned me, he will probably visit my prison, and find this. In such a case, he may go to the house of the noble Spaniard who was his uncle's guest at Lindisfarne. He has a packet in his possession, that will inform Louis de Montemar of the fate of his father.

"William, Duke de Ripperda."

There was a thousand daggers in the

few first words of this brief epistle. *If my son have not abandoned me.* To be suspected by his father of such parricide, was almost more than he could bear. He clenched the letter against his bursting heart, and fell back in the seat.

" My master! my dear master!" exclaimed the pitying Lorenzo, as he saw the fearful changes in his countenance, and opened a window to give him air. Louis unclosed his eye-lids; and those once cheering and radiant eyes, which used to break from under them like the morning star from the tender shades of night, turned on his faithful servant, bloodshot and dimmed with bitterest anguish.

" What does my Lord say, in that cruel letter," demanded the affectionate youth, " that can have affected you thus?"

Louis put the letter into his hands. It was not needful to point to the lines

which had barbed him so severely; and Lorenzo read them with a bleeding heart, both for father and son. He remarked, that outraged as the Duke had been by the ingratitude of all the world, the extraordinary length of their voyage might have driven him to some misconception regarding their detention.

"It is hard," continued he, "to be entirely just ourselves, when every body about us treats us with injustice; and the Duke, though a great and a good man, is yet a man; and must share some of our infirmities. You, my Lord, will seek an opportunity to obey him immediately; and then, all these too natural suspicions must be destroyed."

Louis looked at the affectionate speaker.

"Excellent Lorenzo!" said he, "my father has found one faithful in your brother. If you too adhere to me, I shall not be quite alone in this desert universe!—I may yet find my father," murmured he to himself, "and die be-

fore him! My life, my life, is all I may now have, to prove my soul's integrity!" Much of this, and more, of the sad wanderings of a spirit overtasked, and wounded in its most susceptible nerve, passed in the mind, and on the half-uttering lips of Louis.

"But where," asked Lorenzo, "are we to seek this friend of Lindisfarne?"

"It is the Marquis Santa Cruz," replied Louis; "General Stanhope will probably tell me where to find him."

"The Marquis has a villa in the Val del Uzeda, between St. Ildefonso and the Escurial," replied Lorenzo, "and there, I know, his family usually resides, as the Marchioness is sometimes in attendance on the Queen."

"Then," cried Louis, "direct the postillions to drive thither. If the Marquis be there, I may yet see my father before another night englooms me in this direful Spain!"

CHAP. XVIII.

It was noon, when Louis again passed the marble gates of the Palacio del Atayada, the deserted mansion of his father; and after journeying over many a league of Arcadian landscape abundant in the olive and the vine; and waving with harvests, which the paternal policy of Ripperda had spread over hill and dale, the heights of Uzeda re-opened to him the distant and transverse vallies of St. Ildefonso and the Escurial.

His carriage turned into a cleft of the hills, overhung with every species of umbrageous trees; and out of whose verdant sides innumerable rills poured themselves over the refreshened earth, from the urns of sculptured nymphs and river-gods reposing in the shade. In the

bosom of this green recess stood the villa of Santa Cruz. All around spoke of elegance and taste. The carriage drove under the light portico; and the servants, who thronged round, gave earnest of the hospitable temper of the owner.

Lorenzo questioned them, whether their lord were at the villa. They replied in the negative, but that his lady was there.

"Then I must see the Marchioness," returned Louis; and he sprang from the carriage, the door of which a servant had already opened. Lorenzo remained below for further orders, while his master was conducted up stairs into a splendid saloon, whose capacious sides were hung with the finest pictures of the Italian and Flemish schools. But no object could displace from the vision of Louis, the dungeon which had contained his father.

He had written his name with pencil upon a leaf which he tore from his

pocket-book, and sent it to the Marchioness. It was some time before a reply was returned to him, or, indeed, any person re-appeared. His anxiety became insufferable. He paced the room with impatience, and a sickening heart. For he knew not but the delay of first one ten minutes, and then of another, before he could follow the track he expected to find in the packet he sought, might, by leaving his father undefended in all the personal dangers of a pursuit, be the very means of allowing him to be retaken.

In the midst of these harassing fears, the door opened, and a young lady entered, who, by her air, could not be mistaken for other than one of the noble members of the family, though her dress was that of a *religieuse*. It was all of spotless white, with a long black rosary hanging from her breast. Her face was mild and pale; but it was the transparent hue of the virgin flower of spring,

clad in her veiling leaves. It was Marcella.

Her mother had received the name of the Marquis de Montemar in her chamber. She was an invalid; but remembering the reception his family had given to her son in Lindisfarne, she sent her daughter to bid him welcome.

When Marcella entered, she drew back a moment, on beholding so different a person from the one she had expected to see in the son of the Duke de Ripperda. He had been reported by the ladies of Vienna as "the glass of fashion, and the mold of form!" Her brother had described him as gay and volant; full of the rich glow of health, and animated with a joyous life, that made the sense ache to follow it through all its wild excursiveness. The Spaniards, on returning from Vienna, spoke of him as vain or proud, a coxcomb or a cynic, just as their envy or their prejudices prevailed. But Sinzen-

dorff, her revered uncle, had written of him as one whom all the women loved, while he loved only honour. His letters had given the Marchioness an account of the young minister's entanglement and release from the woman who had laid similar snares for her son; and he dwelt with encomium on his unshaken firmness through every change of fortune. As Marcella passed from her mother's chamber, these recollections crowded upon her; and all were calculated to increase the timidity of her approach. She was going to present herself, and alone, to an admired young man, proud in conscious dignity, whose lustre calamity could not dim, and whose spirit was exasperated by oppression!

But instead of this lofty Marquis de Montemar, gallant in attire, and resplendent in manly beauty; stern in resentful virtue; and upholding in his own high port, all the threatened honours of his race; she beheld a youthful, and a

fine form indeed, but in a neglected dress covered with dust. The jewels of his hat were broken away; and its disordered plumage darkly shaded his colourless cheek and eyes, whence every ray of joy had fled. Beauty was there; but it was the beauty of sadness; it was the crushed ruin of what might once have been bright and aspiring.

Marcella wondered, for a moment, at the change which grief must have made; and with a very different sentiment from that with which she entered, she approached the son of Ripperda. She held a packet in her hand. Louis's heart bounded towards it, and he hastily advanced.

"From my father, Madam!"

"It was left with my mother two nights ago, by the Duke de Ripperda's servant;" replied she; "and he informed her, that the envelope directed to my father, contained a letter for the Marquis de Montemar. My mother would not

detain it from you till she could present it herself; being only now preparing to leave her chamber, and therefore she confided its delivery to me."

As she spoke, she put the packet into his hand. By these words he found he was in the presence of the Marquis Santa Cruz's daughter; and, expressing his thanks, he begged permission to peruse it before he quitted the house. She answered politely in the affirmative, and immediately withdrew.

Louis had observed nothing of her face or figure, to distinguish her again from the next stranger who might enter the room. The novelty of her dress, however, could not escape even his possessed eye; and in the moment he learnt who she was, he thought of Ferdinand and Alice, and of their future union; of which her assumption of that garb seemed a promise. But as soon as she disappeared, he forgot both, and every accompanying circumstance, and even

where he was, in his eagerness to make himself master of the contents of the packet.

On breaking the seal, a letter at the top of a bundle of papers presented itself. He seized it, and began to read it with avidity. It was written by Ripperda under all the exasperation of his mind, when he believed himself not merely the object of the world's ingratitude, but abandoned by his own and only son. Yet he forebore to specify his injuries; saying, that to name them, would be to stigmatize the whole human race. He had hitherto lived for universal man:—his days should terminate on a different principle. He would yet confound his enemies, and astonish Europe. But it should not be by embracing revenge through the treasons, whose arms were extended to receive and to avenge him. He would maintain his integrity to the last; and from the heights of Gibraltar assert the honour of

a name, whose last glories might die with him, but never should wane in his person till he set in the grave.

Louis would not think twice on the implied suspicions against himself, which every sentence of the letter contained. They were bitterness to his heart; but he knew his innocence. He now knew the point to which his father was gone; and thither he determined to follow him.

The papers in the packet contained schedules of the vast properties of the Duke, that were cast over the face of Spain, in landed estates, immense manufactories, and countless avenues of merchandize.

"I bestow them all on my son;" was written by Ripperda on the envelope which contained the catalogue; "they may give power and consequence to the Marquis de Montemar, when he has forgotten that the Duke de Ripperda was his father."

A memorandum of his territories in

Spanish America was bound up with the others; and brief directions added on each head, how his son was to secure his rights in them all.

Louis ran over these lists and their explications, that he might not leave a single word unnoted; but when he had finished, he closed up all that related to pecuniary affairs, and laying them aside in the packet, again turned to the letter. It alone would be his study and business, till he should reach Gibraltar, and prove to his father, that by his side, in poverty or disgrace, it was his determination to live or die.

He was yet leaning over the letter, perusing it a second time, when he heard the door open behind him. He looked round, and saw the daughter of Santa Cruz re-enter, supporting on her arm an elderly lady of a noble air, who appeared an invalid. He guessed her to be the Marchioness; and rising instantly, approached her.

"Marquis," said she, "I come, thus in my sick attire, to welcome the son of the Duke de Ripperda, to the house of my husband. I know his respect for your father; also his esteem of yourself; and whatever may have been the misrepresentations of evil tongues, my brother the Count Sinzendorff has not left the character of the Marquis de Montemar without an advocate."

The Marchioness observed a brilliant flush shoot over the face of her auditor, as he bowed his head to her last words. She added, in a still more respectful tone, softened even to tenderness by the sentiment of pity; "The machinations of these enemies have been too successful against the Duke. Indeed, I doubt not, that packet has spared me the pain of saying, you must seek your noble father in the Alcazar of Segovia."

Louis briefly related the events of the last six hours; and presented her the

note to read, which his servant had found on the table in the prison, and which had referred him to the Marquis Santa Cruz. The Marchioness had seated herself, and placed her guest beside her. She read the note; and looked with maternal sympathy upon the distressful countenance of the duteous son to whom it addressed so cutting a reproach. Her commiserating questions, and the knowledge she shewed of all the virtues of his father; added to the information, that her husband was hastening from Italy, to interest himself in his cause; seemed to demand from Louis his fullest confidence. He revealed to her the substance of what his father had written in the packet; and declared his intention to follow him immediately to Gibraltar.

The Marchioness approved of his reunion with his father, but resisted his quitting her house, till he had taken the repose she saw he so much needed. Louis would have been unmoved in his

resolve to commence his journey that very night, had she not suggested, that, severely as the Duke had been used before his flight, should he be retaken, his treatment would be yet more rigorous; and, therefore, his son must be careful not to be himself the guide to so fearful a catastrophe. She assured Louis, that now ministers knew of his arrival, all his movements would be watched; and that above all things, his pursuing the direct route of his father, must be avoided. She urged, that a rash step at this crisis, might be fatal; and, therefore, conjured him to remain that night at least, under her roof; where he might consider and reconder his future plans, and take the rest that was necessary to support him through the trials he might yet have to sustain.

There was so much good sense and precaution in this counsel, that Louis no longer found an argument to oppose it; and adopting her advice of turning in a direction from Gibraltar, rather than to-

wards it, proposed going to Cadiz, and thence hiring a vessel to take him by sea to the British fortress. This being sanctioned by her approbation, he no longer hesitated to pass the remainder of the day, and the night, under her friendly shelter; and while she retired with her daughter, he followed a page to an apartment, where every comfort was provided, that could refresh the weary traveller.

After she had withdrawn, the Marchioness would not permit her daughter to quit the side of the couch on which she reclined; but continued discoursing of the interesting son of the fugitive Duke, and recapitulating all the kindnesses which his English relatives had shewn to her darling Ferdinand in Lindisfarne.

"Marcella," said she, "we must repay part of that vast debt, to this inestimable young man. Your brother has not exaggerated his merits. For, never did I see

exquisite beauty so unconsciously possessed; nor heroic indifference to the world's idols, expressed with such noble simplicity."

When Louis rejoined the kind hostess, his misfortunes and his manners had so happily propitiated, she was seated with her meditative daughter in the evening saloon; which opened to a small lake, surrounded by aromatic groves. She rose to receive him.

Relieved from immediate alarm for his father's personal safety, by knowing that his projected asylum was the one least likely to occur to his pursuers, Louis's agitated mind had sunk into a kind of torpid repose. He took the seat offered to him, by the Marchioness; and listened to her conversation with soothed attention. There was something in her figure and air, which so reminded him of the cherishing mother of his youth, Mrs. Coningsby, that his harassed soul seemed to have regained its home, while he drank

in her sweet maternal comfortings. She appeared to know by intuition the fittest medicine for his spirit; but she only spoke from her own noble nature, and it mingled direct with his. She expatiated on his father's character; on the envy of his rivals; and dated his fall to their ambition alone. She dwelt on the high reverence in which he was held by the King and Queen; and affirmed, that justice must be done him, both by Sovereign and people, when experience should have taught them how they had cast away their benefactor.—

"Meanwhile," said she, "how glorious he is in suffering magnanimously for his virtues!"

"So to suffer, is the Cross that makes our virtues Christian!" observed Marcella in a low voice, hardly aware that she had uttered what was passing in her thoughts.

The remark was so like what he would

have expected from the lips of his first christian teacher, that Louis turned towards the speaker. He turned to look on her; recollecting that she was not merely the daughter of the amiable woman who was so maternally solicitous about him; but the disinterested sister, whose self-sacrifice was to empower her brother to complete the happiness of Alice Coningsby. Though she had been the first to welcome him to this hospitable refuge, in most inhospitable Spain, he had noticed her so little, he could not have recognised her in any other garb. He now perused her pensive countenance. It was fair and meek, and touched with the tenderest sensibility. Her eyes were hidden with their downward lashes; and the shadow of her veil tempered the dazzling whiteness of her forehead, while the dark and glossy tresses that braided its arching brows, gave her the air of a youthful Madonna. Her soft white hand at that moment pressing

the cross to her bosom, completed the picture. Unconscious of observation, she was then breathing an internal prayer for the Duke and his son; and continuing her meditations on their fate, did not raise her eyes from the floor.

Louis looked on her, but it was as he would have looked on a lovely image of the consecrated being she resembled; and again he turned to the voice of her mother.

The Marchioness finding him so composed, entered fully into all she knew of the rise and progress of the conspiracy which had ruined his father. She recounted the various perfidies of the inmates of the Palais d'Espagne; which had been confided to her, in the exultation of triumph, by Donna Laura. She narrated particulars in the correspondence between de Patinos and his father, the Marquis de Castellor; and gave instances of even deeper double-dealing in Baptista Orendayn, the nephew of the

Count de Paz. Indeed, she hoped, the Marquis, her husband, would be able to prove, by what she could impart, that Orendayn was concerned with a sub-borned band of ruffians who attacked the Duke de Ripperda in the Appenines; and would certainly have destroyed him there, but for the fortunate intervention of a stranger.

This assassination was the device of his Spanish rivals. And it was as well known by the Marchioness's informants, that the attempt which was made on the Duke in the porch of the Jesuits' college, was the work of certain Austrians at the court of Vienna; and not at all arising from the partizans of the Electress. The Bavarians had never gone farther than to way-lay for the state papers; and under the leading of Count Stalhberg, they had taken the dispatches from Castanos; which, being examined by the party, were afterwards returned.

In recapitulating this host of jealous

adversaries, she asserted that none were so actively hostile to Ripperda as the Austrian junto; at the head of which was Count Routemberg, whose darling policy was to place eternal barriers between any future junction of the empire and Spain. In his house the confederation was formed, that was to accomplish the destruction of Ripperda and his plans; and by a secret management it was supported and impelled by the Emperor himself.

While Louis listened to this information, which agreed so fatally with Wharton's last conference in the garden of the chateau, he became more and more bewildered on the motives of his false friend.

At last the Marchioness mentioned that name, which never could be heard by him with indifference; his confidence, or his detestation must rest upon it. He was thinking of the accumulated treachery of Wharton, when she pro-

nounced his name. He started as if it took him by surprise. In her eagerness she did not observe his emotion, but dwelt on the English Duke's clandestine interviews with Grimaldo, de Paz, and the Queen; shewing their results in the King's inflexibility to Ripperda's demands to be heard; and his subsequent warrant, to silence the injured minister's appeal in the sealed dungeons of the Inquisition.

In the height of her representations, Louis, with a tremendous fire in his before faded eye, grasped the arm of the Marchioness, and desperately exclaimed,

"Cease that theme—or it will make me a murderer!"

His manner alarmed the Marchioness, and terrified Marcella. The former, however, restrained herself, and mildly pressing down the hand that clasped her's, detained him on his seat; while Marcella started from her chair, and gazed upon his flashing countenance with dismay.

His terrific guilty words yet rung in her ears. For a moment his eye caught the expression of her's; and he answered the horror in her face by the exclamation,

"I loved, and trusted him—and he has betrayed my father!"

He turned away as he spoke, and walked to the other end of the room. The eyes of the Marchioness and her daughter met with an anguish of commiseration in each, neither of them could utter. Marcella looked again at his agitated movements, as his back was towards her. His words, "I loved, and trusted him—and he betrayed my father!" had smote upon her filial heart; and tears gushing into her eyes, she glided from his presence, to pray and weep in secret.

When Louis recovered himself, he scarcely remarked that Marcella had withdrawn.

In hopes to sooth him, the Marchioness

asked two or three questions respecting Wharton. Twice he attempted to speak, before he could give any voice to what he wished to say; at last he hastily articulated.

"Spare me on this subject. I would forget him, if God will grant me that gracious oblivion; for that is the only way by which I can remain guiltless of his blood!"

"Rash de Montemar!" cried the Marchioness, pitying while she reproved; "were my holy daughter here, she would tell you, that if you have hope of heaven's pardon for your own errors, you must forgive your enemies!"

An agonized smile gleamed on his convulsed lip.

"My own enemies, I could forgive, and load with benefits. There are some, were they my enemies alone, I could love in spite of every injury; and pray for them, as for the peace of my own soul. But when they extend their ma-

lice to my father; when they betray his trusting faith, and give him to the murderous gripe of them who lurk for his honour and his life: they are his enemies, and I cannot forgive them."

"Yet, do not risk your life, which is now his sole comfort," cried she, "Appeal to Heaven, and it will avenge you."

Again Louis walked from her. He felt that, inexorably as he now believed he hated Wharton, and horrible as was the idea of meeting him arm to arm; yet, even that would be more tolerable to him than to invoke Almighty power for vengeance.

A sad confusion of right and wrong, struggled in his breast; but the better principle prevailed; and, even while the pressure of new convictions against Wharton, crowded upon him, he felt that the bitterest pang of all, would be an assurance that by such guilt on guilt, his false friend had forfeited the

mercy of his God. In his fiercest throes of resentment, he could yet say with the Divine Spirit, " I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner; but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live!"

The Marchioness marked his unuttered emotion, and with self-blame at the amplitude of her communications, apologised for her indiscretion, and proposed his seeking composure in rest. He gladly acquiesced; while he begged her, not to distress herself by regretting what she had said; for it was necessary to his father's preservation and to his own, that he should know all his enemies, and the extent of their malice.

It was now within an hour of midnight. On Louis entering his chamber, he sent away Lorenzo; that he, at least, might enjoy the sleep that fled his master's eyes. In a few minutes he was alone, in a magnificent apartment, where every tranquillizing luxury invited to re-

pose. But the downy couch would then have been a bed of thorns to him. He continued to walk the room from hour to hour, in perturbed meditation on all that he had seen and heard through the day.

His spirit was on the wing to rush through every obstacle to his father's feet; to labour day and night, to redeem the reputation sacrificed by his flight; and to avenge himself on the slanderous world, by some glorious assertion of the names of de Montemar and Ripperda.

At last, his exhausted taper went out suddenly; and, being without the means of replenishing its light, he threw himself on the bed to muse till morning.

CHAP. XIX.

About an hour before sun-rise, the inhabitants of the villa were aroused by the clattering of horses' hoofs upon the pavement around the house, which was speedily followed by a loud knocking at the gates.

The Marchioness and her daughter, in their dressing-gowns, met in the corridor between their rooms, with each a lamp in their hand. Alarm was in the countenance of both; which was increased to indescribable terror, when the chamberlain of the mansion appeared on the stairs, and informed them, he had looked from his window to demand the cause of such untimely disturbance; and the answer he received was from the leader of the party, who said he came to arrest the Marquis de Montemar, in the name of the King.

Marcella's knees shook under her, and a mist passed over her eyes; but it was only transitory; she heard the steady orders of her mother, and rallied her own presence of mind in the same instant.

"Pedro," said the Marchioness, "doubly barricade the doors; and let no man enter, till I have spoken with the Marquis."

Pedro flew to obey his lady, and she proceeded along the gallery to the apartment of her guest. Marcella did not follow her in, but sunk into a seat, near the door of the chamber. The lock yielded to her mother's hand. She saw her enter, and could distinctly hear her footsteps as she cautiously approached the bed, and gently called on the name of de Montemar, to awaken him. At last, she heard him start from the leaden slumber, which had only recently fallen on his harassed faculties; and with an exclamation of surprise at seeing the

Marchioness leaning over him at that hour, and in such evident agitation; he sprang from the bed.

The tumult at the outside of the house, strenuously demanding admittance, and the replies from within to withhold it for a time, explained the alarm to Louis, almost before his trembling hostess could speak the words of his arrest. Being fortunately dressed, he stepped forward with an immediate tranquillity succeeding his first appalled thought, that, by this new detention, his father would yet be left to his cruel suspicions. But he suddenly recollected, that Lorenzo might seek him, if he could not; and that when his father knew how he was detained, he could no longer doubt his filial duty. This passed through his mind in a moment; and taking the agitated hand of the Marchioness, he told her his wish respecting Lorenzo; and entreating her not to be distressed at what could not essentially injure him,

begged her to order her servants to request the officers to be patient for a few minutes only, when he would instantly put himself into their hands.

"Never!" cried she, "you are my husband's guest, and you shall not be forced from his house during his absence. Ill should I repay the family who fostered my son, were I to surrender their darling into the hands of his enemies. I am aware they may break open my doors; but there is a place in this villa they cannot discover. Come with me, and you shall be safe, till the way is clear for your complete escape."

Surprised at this proposal, Louis did not interrupt her; but when she paused, and put her arm on his, to draw him towards the offered asylum, he earnestly thanked her, yet repeated that it was his fixed intention to obey the arrest of the king.

"What?" cried she, "this is despair, beyond their hopes! They will con-

fine, perhaps torture you! They could not have obtained this warrant from the King, had they not made him believe that you are accessary to the crimes with which they charge your father. They will try to compel you to confession; and, though you are blameless, you will suffer the cruelest ordeal of transgression. They fear your talents; and, if the laws refuse to be their emissary; when you are in the solitude of a prison, how many means will present themselves, of ridding them of what they fear!"

In great emotion, she followed up these representations with renewed beseeching that he would accompany her to a temporary concealment.

"It is for my father's enemies to fly;" returned he, in a firm though gentle tone; "they are guilty of treachery to the confidence of their Sovereign, and flight may do them service. But I am innocent of offence against this country; my father has been its benefactor. I

will therefore stay, to meet any trial they may devise, to impugn him in my person. And, if my defence of his integrity fail with his unjust judges; and, should I even fall in the attempt, honest men will form a truer judgement; and, such hearts as yours, and those I left in England, will still respect Ripperda and his son."

In despair at his resolution, the Marchioness reminded him, that the father whom he so justly revered, acted on a different principle. He was innocent, and menaced; and he fled.

"And there," returned Louis, "he gave the advantage to his enemies, that sanctions the arrest of his son. He should have demanded open trial. All Europe would have supported the demand; and in the face of Europe he would have been acquitted. To this I would yet urge him. His proud rivals will not dare suffer his return; and their

cowardice will, of itself, pronounce his triumph."

The Marchioness clung to him, as the uproar below increased, and she thought by the extraordinary noise, that her gates were burst open.

"Alas!" cried she," you know not the summary justice of this country! The bow-string is yet amongst us, — and you will perish in prison, unheard, unremembered! — Oh, de Montemar, in the name of all you love, hasten with me!"

"In the name of all I love and honour, dearest Madam!" returned he, straining her respected and clinging form to his grateful heart, "I must remain, and abide the ways of Providence."

"Marcella!" cried the Marchioness, looking round, and seeing her daughter, who had unconsciously started into the room on hearing the augmented tumult below; "Marcella, come hither, and by your holy eloquence conjure him to

fly, and save these men the sin of murder!"

Marcella stood still, looking on the ground. Her mother continued her entreaties to him, and then again implored her daughter.

"Speak to him, my heaven-devoted child! For that father's sake, conjure him to abandon the ruinous project of abiding by the justice of his enemies!"

Marcella's complexion was the hue of death, while she gaspingly answered:

"I cannot urge the Marquis to depart from sentiments I so much honour."

Louis looked from the weeping Marchioness, who hung on him with maternal tenderness, to the daughter, pale, and trembling, but firm in the faith that nerved his soul.

"Madam," said he, "I thank you for this support," then turning to her mother, "Revered lady," cried he, "remember me in your prayers, and I shall not fear the malice of my enemies!"

The words of her daughter had put the Marchioness to silence, and she leaned upon the shoulder of Louis, drowned in tears. At this moment the clamour of many feet were heard upon the stairs, and a man bursting into the room, told his mistress that Don Diego Cuellar, one of the Alcaids, had ordered the gates to be forced; and, was not only in the house, but then approaching the corridor. The Marchioness sobbed aloud, and exclaimed in wild grief, "my son, my son!" As if it were Don Ferdinald she held in her arms.

Louis supported her on his bosom, but did not hesitate to say to the servant; "tell the officer, I am at his orders. I will descend to him immediately."

But before the man could obey, Don Diego and his train were in the corridor, and in the room. A threatening denunciation was in his visage, as he advanced with his staff of office towards his prisoner. Louis perceived the storm; and

to spare the sensibility of his hostess any shew of violence, he intercepted the thunder of the Alcaid, by repeating the message he had sent by the servant.

"'Tis well, Sir," replied the officer, "but the resistance which has been made, must be answered for before the council."

"I will answer for it, and all else that may be brought against me, when I am before the council;" replied Louis, "but meanwhile, I request of your courtesy as a Gentleman, to dismiss your guards till I can sooth this lady."

The manner of his prisoner, sufficiently mollified the officer; and he made a sign to his attendants to withdraw. The Marchioness then turned to the Alcaid; and, to her fearful interrogatories, he informed her how Louis had been traced to her house.

On his departure from the Alcazar, the warden thought it prudent to send

a person to observe his movements. This spy followed him to the Val del Uzeda; and then, proceeding to St. Ildefonso, (where the royal family were), apprised the ministers of the escape of Ripperda, and where they might find his son. A council was convened; and it determined that Louis should be arrested, and held in strict ward, till information could be gained of the flight and views of his father.

"When that is ascertained," continued the Alcaid, "the enlargement of the Marquis de Montemar will be brought into immediate consideration."

The Marchioness, being a little assured, drew Louis aside; and in a low voice, entreated him to rely on the strenuous friendship of her husband, and to depend upon seeing her in whatever prison he might be confined. He expressed his gratitude in emphatic, but brief terms; and begged her to continue her

kindness, by writing what had happened, and transmitting it by Lorenzo to his father.

Marcella stood all this while, leaning against the tapestry, in a silent astonishment of thought and feeling.

Lorenzo had been the most active below, in keeping out the officers; and, having extricated himself from them who had seized him in consequence, he now rushed into the room, and in much agitation threw himself at the feet of his master. Louis grasped the faithful hand that clung to his, and answered the fervent vows to follow him into all captivity, by an impressive whisper:—

"You must serve me here. The Marchioness will tell you how."

Then, advancing to the officer, he repeated, "Sir, I am ready."

Don Diego beckoned two guards, who immediately drew near their prisoner. They attempted to lay their hands on the sword and pistols with which his gene-

rous hostess had re-furnished him the preceding night; but he repelled them, and demanded of the Alcaid, 'what was meant by this indignity.

" To disarm you, Sir," replied the officer, " such are my orders. You menaced the warden of the Alcazar, in the discharge of his duty; we are to be protected in ours, and you must yield your weapons, or have them forced from you."

" The laws require it of me, as your prisoner?"

" They do."

Louis said no more, but put his sword and pistols into the Alcaid's hands.

" He has a poniard!" cried one of the attendants, (who was indeed the spy which had watched his steps,) " I saw it in his vest, when he leaped from the window in the dungeon."

Louis had forgotten this weapon, but did not demur in relinquishing it also.

The Marchioness shuddered. " What"

cried she, " he is to have no defence? Merciless men !"

" The laws, and their honour, will defend me, Madam !" returned he, putting her hands to his lips ; " I fear no man, for I have injured none."

By a sign from the Alcaid, the soldiers then closed around him, and the Marchioness sinking on the bosom of her daughter, did not see his last grateful look as he was hurried from the room.

CHAP. XX.

A DEEPER dungeon than that which had confined the father, now received the son. The light which discovered its dismal bounds to his solitary eyes, came from a small grated aperture in the vaulted roof. Escape, then, had he meditated such an expedient, was impossible.

But so far was that idea from presenting itself to his thoughts, he never ceased lamenting that his injured father had been reduced to so equivocal an alternative. He knew not how to reconcile the imprudence of the act, with Ripperda's consummate wisdom; till, as he passed hours in these lonely musings, the events of history occurred to his memory; and he saw, that there may

be times in the lives of the most illustrious characters, when their good genius, or their good sense, seems to desert them; the faculty of judgement is taken away; and they obey the impulse of passion, with all the blind zeal of the most inconsiderate of men. Some such alienation of his better reason, Louis thought must have occurred in the experienced mind of Ripperda, before he could have taken so condemning a step; for of neither his personal courage, nor patriotic integrity, could this devoted son conceive a suspicion. From infancy to manhood, he had but one impression of his father, that—

"———— in his port divine
The image of his glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, rectitude severe and pure!"

And almost worshipping the human idol in his heart, as formed—

"For God only—his son, for God in him!"

He loved and honoured him without measure.

On the night of his arrival, he learnt that his prison was the castle of Madrid. But it was not necessary for him to enquire how strict, or how apparently long, was to be his confinement. Hour after hour, day after day, wore away; and no person was suffered to approach him; no letter permitted to reach his hand; and when he attempted to question his goaler, whether the Marchioness Santa Cruz had visited his prison; or if tidings had yet transpired of the Duke de Ripperda; his only answers were gloomy denials of all communication.

Though his portmanteau had been brought to him, the writing materials and money it contained, were taken out in his presence, and even his books of devotion shared the same fate. Indeed, the latter seemed a prize of some moment to the officer who superintended the search, for when the little bible, which had been the gift of his Pastor uncle, opened its title page to the eye

of superstition, the alarmed fanatic ordered it to be carried under a strong guard, to the grand inquisitor.

Remonstrance on this, or on any other head, was vain; and under a suspense that increased to torture, three weeks dragged away their anxious days. At times, he almost suspected that the Marchioness Santa Cruz had forgotten him; then, that Lorenzo had arrived in Gibraltar, and failed of convincing Ripperda of the truth of his son. Every frightful apprehension of doubted honour; of absolute abandonment to his enemies; and an endless captivity in this dreary dungeon, assailed him in the gloom of his uncompanioned thoughts.

Every rigor of hard fare, and severe usage, was inexorably brought upon him. His bed was on the flinty pavement; his food, the scanty portion of a criminal. But the conscience of Louis was at rest; and he soon found that "man does not live by bread alone!"

Though his gaolers seemed inclined to do so much wrong in their treatment of him, he never repented that he had done rightly in submitting to the law of his new country, by yielding himself to their power. But when he writhed under the tyrannous grasp with which they held him, he could not but remember, with many a yearning comparison, the country which had fostered his infancy. There he had imbibed the mingled tides of freedom and of equity, as from the breast of a mother. Here the proud state that claimed him as her own offspring, met him with the injustice of a malignant step-dame.

"Noble, regretted England!" cried he, "I had rather be a door-keeper in thy courts, than a prince in this land of despotism!"

In these lingering weeks of anxious loneliness, every impetuous passion, and daring wish; every motive and action, of his short but eventful life, passed in

review before him; his impatience to plunge into the world, and the readiness with which he gave way to its delusions. While reflection humbled him to the dust; the consciousness of having, in all his transgressions, erred from mistake or inconsideration, but never from wilfulness, raised his head to that Being, whom the precepts of Mr. Athelstone had so often told him to "Remember in the days of his youth; and in his extremity, he should not be forgotten." These thoughts were heavenly visitants to the young captive, who lay like Joseph in bonds, with Faith, and Hope, and Innocence, his comforters. The cheering lamp which these immortal sisters lit in his heart, illumined the dark eclipse with which the recent treacheries of man had overshadowed it. Yet he never thought of Wharton but with a horror that shook his soul. He durst not look steadily on his image; for no light was there.

A fourth week commenced. It was

the anniversary of that day in the past autumn, when Santa Cruz took his leave of Lindisfarne; and Louis stood gazing on his departing vessel, vehemently wishing to hang upon its sails, and so be transported to his father and to action! It was also the Sabbath-day! And the uncle, who a year ago had then stood by his side, admonishing the intemperate desire; he, at this dismal anniversary, was, even at that hour, in the little church of Lindisfarne, beseeching Heaven's "pity on all prisoners and captives!" unconscious he was then putting up a prayer for his own darling child!

The tears were not without balm, that filled the eyes of his nephew at the recollection.

In the midst of these meditations, the dungeon door opened, and Santa Cruz himself appeared on the threshold. Louis started from his seat, and could have cried aloud:—

"Then my God has remembered me!"

But tidings from his father were also in his thoughts, and he only ejaculated that revered name.

Santa Cruz embraced him, with more agitation than his stately mien might have announced.

"The Duke de Ripperda has not been heard of;" returned he, "he must therefore be safe. By any other means than that of flight, I would his son were equally secure from his enemies!"

Fearless for himself, Louis entered at once upon his father's case. His first wish was to induce the Marquis to solicit the King to hear the son in defence of the parent; or, if that were denied, to allow Santa Cruz to present a written vindication of Ripperda's Austrian ministry. He gave the Marquis a simple narrative of every transaction, from the beginning of the business to the stage in which he left it at his recall; and, in the course of the explanation, he could

not avoid noticing the destructive mystery into which the double conduct of Duke Wharton had involved every proceeding, even to those in which he had no explicable concern.

"You are already avenged of him," replied the Marquis, "General Stanhope transmitted to his government all the Duke de Ripperda reported to him of Wharton's secret practices in favour of the exiled Sovereign. George of Brunswick has taken alarm at so deep a scheme; and the consequence is, the confiscation of your enemy's estates, and a reward offered for his apprehension."

Louis was planet-struck at this information. The words which Wharton had spoken to him in the park of Bamborough, murmured in his ears, — "*I put my life in your hands!*"

"And my father has accused him! — Has set that life at a price! — The country in which we first met, is now

no more to him than to me. He is an out-law, — I, a prisoner!"

Louis was silent under these thoughts; a stricture was on his heart, but he recovered himself, while Santa Cruz proceeded in his discourse.

He had been only a few days returned to Spain. The Marchioness lost no time in informing him of all she knew relative to the fall of Ripperda, and the arrest of his son; and, urged by her, as well as his own zeal, he hastened to Madrid. He there investigated the affair. Among other nefarious particulars respecting the overthrow of the ex-minister, he learnt what was to have been its bloody consequence. The king was so pressed by the British Ambassador on the outrageous seizure of his guest; and some of the northern envoys openly pleading their conviction of the Duke de Ripperda's general integrity; the Spanish ministers feared to stem such an opposition of opinion, should they venture their prede-

cessor in a public trial; and aware of their inability to convict him of treachery, peculation, and unlawful ambition, (the grounds of his impeachment,) they had recourse to the *Lettres de cachet* of the Inquisition.

"Did I believe that your father's reconciliation to the Romish Church were hypocrisy," continued the Marquis, "I should be the first to approve his sentence. But I know the spring of these accusations; and that the penalty of imputed heresy would soon have been paid."

Santa Cruz did not stop at this observation, but candidly acknowledged that if ever the flight of an innocent man from the bonds of his country, were an act of compulsive prudence, it was in the case of Ripperda. He added,

"It is not here, as in England, that the laws govern the prince. Arbitrary power holds them in check; and, when once a man is seized, if he cannot at-

tain the grace of his judge, he has little dependance on his justice."

The Marquis then informed Louis, that he had made personal applications to the ministers and to the queen, to beg their interference with Philip for his trial or enlargement. The ministers were inflexible; and Isabella not less firm in her refusal. All that he could extract from their clemency, (or rather from that of the queen alone,) was a hard-wrung permission to visit Louis in his cell.

"Yet," said the Marquis, "my hopes do not stop there. One step in humanity warrants the expectation of a second. I am in favour with Her Majesty. I came to be, what you propose, the medium of your father's vindication; and that will comprehend your own."

Impressed with the deepest gratitude, Louis confided to his disinterested friend, the whole contents of the packet he had left in the care of the Marchioness. Ac-

cording to his previous request, she had entrusted her husband with the secret of Ripperda's asylum; and now he acknowledged, that one object of his present visit, was to obtain Louis's permission to confide it also to the Queen. He urged, that it would flatter the peculiarities of her character, and might conciliate her good offices for his liberty. Being at Gibraltar, Ripperda was out of the reach of personal danger, even should the secret transpire beyond herself; and, mean- [illegible] the measure might do every thing [illegible] son, and his son's final wishes in the assertion of his father's fame.

"Should her influence be seriously aroused in your behalf," said the Marquis, "you would find it resistless with the King; therefore peremptory with his ministers."

Sensible as he was that his father's asylum was chosen with honour, and that its divulgement could be productive of no possible harm, Louis had every dispo-

sition to yield to this advice. But his eagerness to adopt any honourable means of facilitating his release, ran before the progressive hopes of his zealous friend, when he found that his father was yet ignorant of his being in Spain.

He learnt from the Marquis, that as soon as he was taken from the Val del Uzeda, a reserve guard had forcibly seized Lorenzo; and borne away him also, to prison.

Soon after imparting the latter information, Santa Cruz rose to retire; promising to use his endeavours for the enlargement of the servant, as well as the master: and, bearing with him many respectful acknowledgements to the Marchioness, he embraced the grateful son of Ripperda, and bade him adieu.

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